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## MEET Martha Elena Vazquez Riojis

An employee at Magna Seating in Allende, Mexico. Martha has been working at Magna Seating for about 4 years. She is 52 years of age. Martha loves life. She is at the centre of work events and enjoys socializing. She enjoys cleaning and organizing her home and with her free time, watching series on Netflix. She had no worries until August 2020 when her life suddenly changed.

Martha was at work when she suddenly felt extreme chest pain. This prompted her to visit the on-site doctor. The doctor completed a check-up to determine the cause of the pain and prescribed medication to help with the pain. The doctor ordered some routine health screening tests which Martha completed. One of these tests was a mammogram, a special type of breast x-ray. A few weeks later, Martha learned that she had Stage II breast cancer.

Later that year, Martha had surgery to remove the cancer and then began her long journey of chemotherapy treatment. She received eight cycles of chemotherapy, each completed three weeks apart. Naturally, the lengthy treatment process took a toll on her physical and mental health.

When asked how this impacted her life, Martha says, "It is difficult to accept the disease and what can happen. You are between life and death. If I had the opportunity to detect it earlier, the treatment would have been different, but now I just have to accept it." Martha was mentally exhausted and tired all the time. She recalls that it was difficult to keep gloomy thoughts out of her mind. She struggled to see any hope for her future.

However, through support from family and friends, Martha was able to make lifestyle changes including eating nutritious food and increasing physical activity. She also practiced self care by reading books and taking part in spiritual activities, particularly praying and meditating. With time, Martha overcame her negative emotions.

She developed a positive mindset and felt happier and healthier. She regained the hope she needed to win her battle with cancer. Martha has recovered. She is now cancer free and a recent check up in September 2022 showed she was in remission.

Martha shares that because she felt healthy and had no family history of cancer, she did not feel it was important to have screening tests or regular check ups. Martha's beliefs changed completely after her cancer diagnosis. She now knows that it is important to have regular physical checkups with her doctor. She wonders if her cancer would have been detected earlier and if her treatment and experience might have been different.

*Martha invites all women to get the screening tests to detect breast cancer early.*

Martha reminds us of the importance of early detection, which brings higher chances of a full recovery.

Regular health screenings aid in early detection of conditions that have no visible signs and symptoms. Screening is an important part of maintaining good health. Screening detects health problems early when chances for successful treatments are highest. Early detection helps to make healthy lifestyle changes to slow disease progression, making an even bigger positive impact on your health and well-being.

*Did you know:*

### **DIABETES SCREENING**

**Did you know that a blood sugar test (called A1C) can detect whether you have diabetes or a chance of developing diabetes in the future?**

If the screening test shows a high-risk of developing diabetes, steps can be taken to prevent your risk from increasing.

**If you think you are at-risk of developing diabetes, speak with your family doctor to create a plan for prevention or management.**



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## HEALTH SCREENINGS

# Prevention & Early Detection

There are many types of screening tests available. Some are done only on those thought to be at risk for the condition, others are based on age, still others are general screening that form part of an overall early detection and prevention program.

Health screening recommendations will vary depending on risk factors including age, health status, genetics, lifestyle, and sex. Some risk factors cannot be changed, such as genetics or ethnicity, while others are more controllable like nutrition and physical activity.

Screening tests can be simple or complex. For example, screening for skin cancer just requires an expert to look at your skin. Whereas screening for breast cancer requires specialized equipment and highly trained specialists to review the results. Screening can be carried out by many health care practitioners. Pharmacists, family doctors, specialists, dietitians and others all have a role in ensuring you get screened for possible health issues.

### EXAMPLES OF COMMON HEALTH SCREENINGS INCLUDE:

- Periodic physical exam (i.e., recording height and weight, listening to your heart and lungs, etc.)
- Blood tests (i.e., blood glucose, cholesterol, thyroid, etc.)
- Blood pressure check
- Skin check
- Colonoscopy or stool test
- Mammogram
- Mental health questionnaire
- Eye examination

Periodic health screening is an effective way to detect and prevent health problems. Screening helps identify conditions that may not be causing any symptoms or presenting with any signs.

A periodic health exam remains the most common form of health screening. It is a good way to get most, if not all, of your screening needs done at one time. In the periodic health exam, your doctor/nurse will ask about your health, family history, lifestyle, and wellbeing. Your height, weight, blood pressure, and pulse will be recorded. The doctor/nurse will examine all your major organ systems including your heart, lungs, and muscles. If necessary, your doctor will order blood tests, x-rays, and other screening tests. Once all the results are available, your doctor will review them and be able to determine what health issue you may have or what health issues you need to watch out for.

The periodic health exam is not the only way to access screening for common health issues. Pharmacies may offer blood glucose tests for diabetes or may have a blood pressure kiosk that you can use. Hearing centers often offer free hearing tests. You should have your eyes examined about every two years with an optometrist as this is a very specialized form of screening that your family doctor usually cannot do.

Health screenings are especially important for maintaining good health, particularly as you age. Many health conditions can be found early or even prevented if regular screening is done. In general, a periodic health exam should be done once every one to two years but speak with your family doctor about how often you should be screened as everybody has different needs.

**Take advantage of screening opportunities in your community, at the pharmacy, public health clinics, health providers and specialized health practitioners.**

## Time to get Screened!



Health screening tests may be performed in your doctor's office, at health fairs, or even at your local pharmacy. Regular health checks and screenings for certain diseases have become routine for most people...but how often do you need to get checked?

If you have any questions about which tests are right for you, please reach out and speak with your doctor/nurse. Here are some guidelines to follow when considering if it is the right time to get a health screening:

### BLOOD PRESSURE

Risk factors for hypertension include lifestyle habits, age, and family history. Get your blood pressure checked at least every 2 years. More often if you have had a past reading that is high. A normal reading is approximately 120/80 mmHg with readings over 130/90 mmHg considered Stage 1 hypertension.

### CHOLESTEROL

Risk factors for high cholesterol include diabetes, smoking, poor diet, family history, and other factors. Get checked at least once every 5 years and more often if your numbers have been elevated before. Several types of cholesterol exist in the body. Standard blood tests screen for "bad" cholesterol such as LDL and non-HDL cholesterol. Non-HDL should be approximately 4.0 mmol/L (155 mg/dl) or less. An optimal LDL reading is approximately 3.5 mmol/L (135 mg/dl) or less.

### DENTAL EXAM

Most people should see their dentist for a dental exam every 6-9 months. Good oral health can reduce the risk and effects of many diseases including diabetes, lung conditions and heart disease. Most people should see their dentist for a yearly dental exam.

### DIABETES

Risk factors for Type II diabetes include being overweight, family history, low activity levels and other factors. Adults over the age of 40 should get tested at least once every 2-3 years. Blood tests such as A1C and fasting blood sugar can be done to check for diabetes. An A1C result of around 5.5 or less is normal, 5.6 - 6.5 suggests pre-diabetes, while a result above 6.5 indicates diabetes.

### MAMMOGRAM

This test is a special x-ray of the breast. Doctors use mammograms to look for early signs of breast cancer. Women who are 40-49 years old should talk to their doctor about when to start screening and how often to get a mammogram. Women who are 50-74 years old and those who are at higher risk for breast cancer should get a mammogram at least once every 2 years.

### PAP TEST (PAP SMEARS)

PAP tests are used to help detect cervical cancer. Sexually active women should have their first PAP test within 3 years of becoming active. All women should get a PAP test done with their periodic exam starting no later than age 21 years. If your PAP test result is normal, your doctor may tell you to wait three years for your next PAP test.

### PROSTATE CANCER

Risk factors for prostate cancer include family history, ethnicity, age and possibly diet. There is controversy about whether we should do screening for prostate cancer. When screening is done, it usually requires a blood test called PSA. Talk to your medical doctor to understand the benefits and risks of getting screened for prostate cancer.



If you think that you are overdue for a health screening, speak with your doctor about when you need your first, or next one!

## SMART GOALS:

# I know my numbers... now what?!

Now that you have completed a health screening and know your results, what are the next steps to achieve your health goals? Whether you have a goal to stop smoking, improve your diet, or exercise more often, SMART goals are a great way to set a plan and put it into action.



### SMART stands for:

**Specific:** The goal should be precise with no room for confusion.

**Measurable:** The goal should be easy to track progress.

**Achievable:** The goal should be within reach.

**Relevant:** The goal should contribute to your broader goals.

**Timely:** The goal should have a specific start and end date.

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SMART goals meet all 5 of these criteria and, as a result, are strategic, focused, and actionable.

### Here is an example of a SMART goal for a person looking to improve their fitness level:

Overall Goal: Improve cardiovascular fitness!

**Specific:** “I will start going on walks 3-4 times a week to get prepared for a 5-kilometer charity event walk that I am participating in at work.”

**Measurable:** “I will follow a training app program that will track my pace and the distance I walk each day to prepare me for the 5-kilometer walk.”

**Achievable:** “I have done some longer distance walking in the past. My body is reasonably healthy, and the event is in 2 months from now. If I aim to walk 3-4 times a week for 20-30 minutes, I should be ready for the upcoming event.”

**Relevant:** “I want to become a fit, healthy, and stronger person — I want to be full of energy and feel the accomplishment of completing this 5-kilometer walk with my team!”

**Timely:** “I have signed up for the event in 2 months from now.”

**SMART goal summary:** “I am going to walk 3-4 times a week for 20-30 minutes and follow a training app to complete a 5-kilometer charity event walk without stopping in 2 months from now.”

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Give SMART goals a try today to set a plan in motion to improve your health and well-being!

## MENTAL HEALTH CORNER:

### Setting boundaries with family and friends

Boundaries are rules and limits that we create to maintain our well-being around others. When surrounded by family and friends, we may get asked certain questions that cause us to feel overwhelmed, anxious, or even angry.

When we set and communicate boundaries about certain topics, it allows the other person to understand our feelings and prevents them from saying things that can be hurtful to us.

Being direct and clear is the best way to set boundaries. An easy way is to use “I Statements.” These statements express exactly what we are feeling and describe the problem at the same time. Below are a few examples of “I Statements”.

#### Example One:

**INSTEAD OF SAYING:** “Why do you always have to make comments about my weight?”

**TRY SAYING:** “I feel uncomfortable when you comment on my weight. What I need is for us to not talk about this subject.”

#### Example Two:

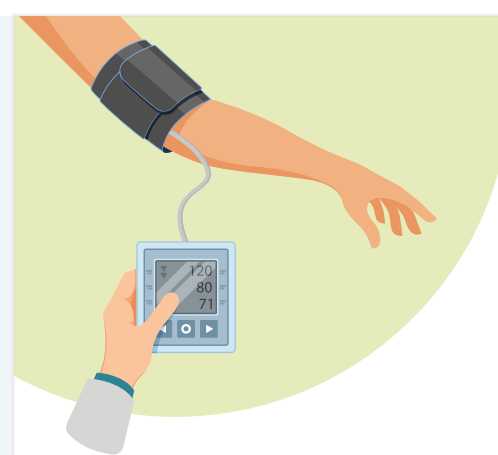
**INSTEAD OF SAYING:** “You take too long to get ready and make me late every time we go somewhere.”

**TRY SAYING:** “I feel anxious when we are late. I would appreciate if we can try managing our time, so we are not late to places.”

#### Example Three:

**INSTEAD OF SAYING:** “Why are you so close-minded and never listen to what I am saying?”

**TRY SAYING:** “I feel frustrated when you dismiss my opinions. What I’d like is for you to try to acknowledge my thoughts and feelings.”



### Did You Know?

#### HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE: THE SILENT KILLER

High blood pressure is known as the “silent killer” because it often has no visible signs or symptoms. If left untreated, it can lead to cardiovascular disease and other heart problems. For these reasons, it is important to check your blood pressure regularly. Blood pressure checks are available for free at most pharmacies, or you can book an appointment with your family doctor.



**STOVETOP BEEF POT ROAST**  
with French Onion Gravy

SERVES  
6

Adapted from [BBC Good Food](#)

**NUTRITIONAL FACTS**

per serving

440 calories	3.5g fiber
15.8g fat	53.7g protein
15.6g carbohydrates	368mg sodium

**INGREDIENTS**

- 1 KG boneless beef chuck roast (fat trimmed)
- 2 TBSP olive oil
- 8 large carrots (tops trimmed)
- 1 celery stalk (chopped)
- ¼ CUP low-sugar white wine
- 2½ CUPS beef stock (choose no salt added or low sodium stock)
- 2 bay leaves
- 2 large onions (thinly sliced)
- 2 thyme sprigs
- 1 TSP butter
- 1 TSP raw sugar
- 2 TSP flour
- Salt & pepper (to taste)

**DIRECTIONS**

1. Preheat oven to 325F and trim fat off roast. Grease a large casserole/ baking dish and set aside.
2. Rub the roast with 1 tsp of oil and season generously with salt and pepper.
3. Heat a large pan over medium-high heat and brown meat for about 10 minutes.
4. In a separate pan, add 2 tsp of oil and sauté carrots and celery until golden in colour.
5. Transfer beef to the greased baking dish and set aside. Deglaze the same pan by adding in the wine and beef stock, then stir for 2 minutes.
6. Pour stock mixture over beef and surround with carrots, celery, and bay leaves. Cover and cook in oven for around 120 minutes.
7. In the meantime, thinly slice onions. Heat 1 tbsp oil in a large pan and add onions, thyme, salt, and pepper. Cover and cook until onions are softened.
8. Remove lid and add in butter and sugar, then let caramelize. Remove the thyme sprigs and set aside.
9. The beef is ready when tender and easy to pull apart. Remove beef and carrots from casserole dish and set aside.
10. Reheat the onion pan, stir in flour, and cook for 1 minute. Whisk onions into beef juices in casserole dish to make a thick onion gravy. Season accordingly with salt and pepper.
11. Add beef and carrots back to casserole dish until ready to slice and serve with vegetables and gravy spooned over. Enjoy!

**HOLIDAY EMOJI Pictionary:**

**Guess that song!**

*Wishing everyone at Magna, along with their loved ones, a safe, healthy, and happy holiday season!*

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- 5 👁️👁️🔵🎄🚫👉

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(1) Jingle Bell Rock, (2) Rocking Around the Christmas Tree, (3) Frosty the Snowman (with a corn cob pipe and a button nose), (4) Winter Wonderland (Sleighbells ring, are you listening), (5) Blue Christmas (I'll have a blue Christmas without you)

**ANSWER KEY**

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**WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!**

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