

Men's Health

HEALTH TESTS

3 ESSENTIAL HEALTH TESTS FOR MEN

Study up, guys: You'll want to pass 3 exams

By Heather Loeb

1. Oral Glucose-Tolerance Test

With this test, you'll find out if you're among the nearly 4 million men with undiagnosed **diabetes**. Unlike a standard fasting blood-sugar check, "the tolerance test stresses your metabolism to see how your body handles the glucose load," says Keith Berkowitz, M.D., medical director of the Center for Balanced Health in New York City.



How it's done: After a night of fasting and a morning **glucose** drink, your blood is drawn several times over 3 hours. A result higher than 140 milligrams (mg) per deciliter at the 2-hour mark is trouble. Before you turn to drugs, talk to your doctor about overhauling your eating and exercise habits.

Cost: \$400 to \$500, often covered by insurance

2. High Sensitivity C-reactive Protein Assay (CRP)

A high CRP level is a sign of arterial **inflammation**, your body's "Heart Attack Ahead" billboard. Research published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* reveals that men with the highest CRP numbers have three times greater odds of infarction than those with low levels.

How it's done: Just offer up your arm. If the result is higher than 3 mg/liter, spoon out the Metamucil: A study in the *Archives of Internal Medicine* states that consuming 30 grams of **fiber** daily can slash your CRP by 40 percent.

Cost: \$15 to \$30, usually covered by insurance

3. Ultraviolet (UV) Photography

Too much UV light can cause **skin cancer**, but just enough can help spot it. "UV photos show the skin's surface in fine detail, to reveal damage that's not yet visible to the naked eye," says Dennis Gross, M.D., a Skin Cancer Foundation spokesman. Any suspicious growths are biopsied at the same time.

How it's done: Most general practitioners don't have the equipment, so you'll need a dermatologist. As for the actual photo shoot, all you have to do is strip.

Cost: \$200 to \$400, not usually covered by insurance

<http://www.menshealth.com/health/health-tests>