

# Preventive Health Services Among Midlife and Older Adults

National Adult Immunization Summit  
Atlanta, GA

Teresa A. Keenan, Ph.D.  
Research & Strategic Analysis  
May 2012

## Background

- Objective: to learn more about midlife and older adults' knowledge and use of preventive health services.
- AARP worked with Woelfel Research, Inc. to field a telephone survey among a nationally representative sample of adults. At the end of the fielding period, responses had been received from 803 adults 45+.

## Background

- Respondents were asked
  - how they would rate their health,
  - how important they consider certain health practices,
  - their receipt of vaccinations or health screenings,
  - their reasons for not receiving vaccines or health screenings, and
  - the helpfulness of reminders.

## Background

- They were also asked about
  - the effect receiving information from particular individuals or organizations would have on their decision to receive vaccines or screenings, and
  - whether a health professional had spoken to them about exercise, alcohol use, smoking, or depression.
- Respondents ages 65 and older were asked additional questions about the *Welcome to Medicare* visit and their receipt of a pneumonia shot.

## Key Findings

- **Importance of Health Practices:** Eating right is given the highest level of importance by respondents, noted by more than nine in ten as *extremely* or *very important*.
- Maintaining a healthy weight, getting enough sleep, getting enough regular exercise, reducing stress, practicing safe sex, or having a yearly physical or check-up were also given high importance marks, with at least eight in ten respondents rating them as *extremely* or *very important*.

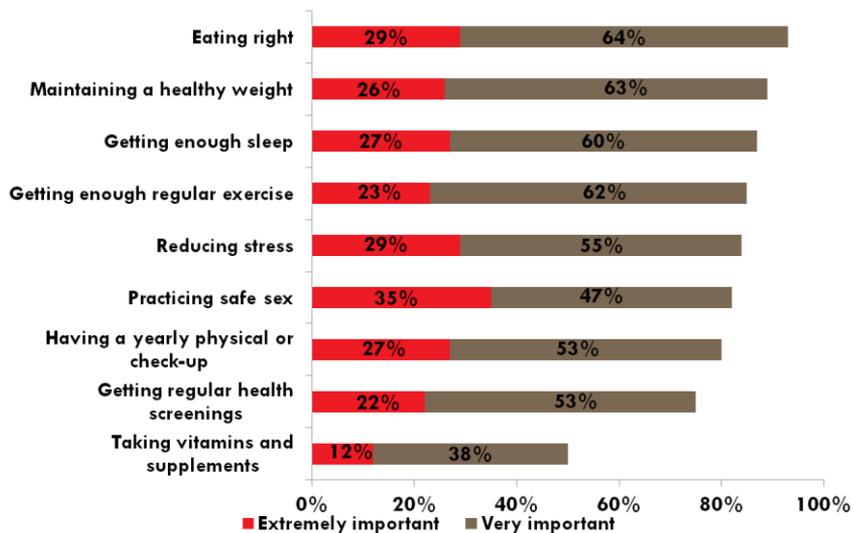
## Key Findings

- **Receipt of Vaccinations or Screenings:** more than nine in ten respondents reported having their blood pressure checked, while more than eight in ten said they had a weight/height measure (body mass index) taken, had a blood cholesterol test, had a dental exam, or had an eye exam.
- About two-thirds of respondents reported having a test for diabetes in the last three years, and nearly six in ten said they had received a flu shot during the same time period.

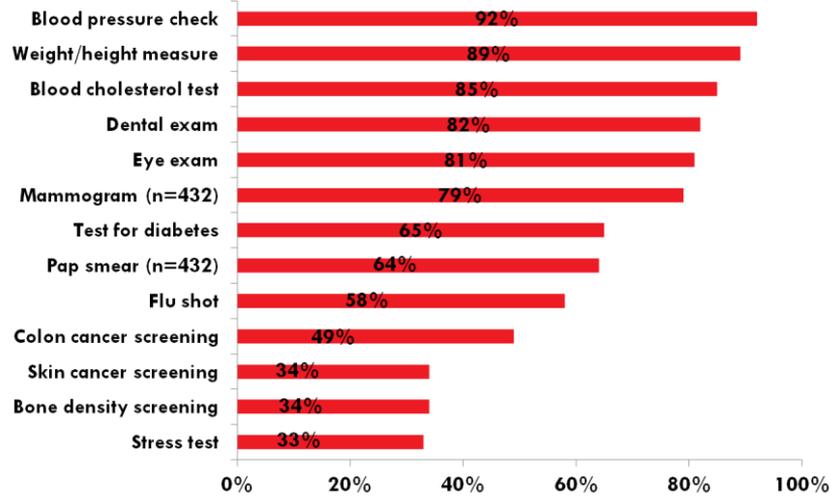
## Key Findings

- **Information Sources:** nearly nine in ten respondents said information from their doctor would motivate them to receive a shot or health screening, while two-thirds noted that prompting from a friend or family member would also help.

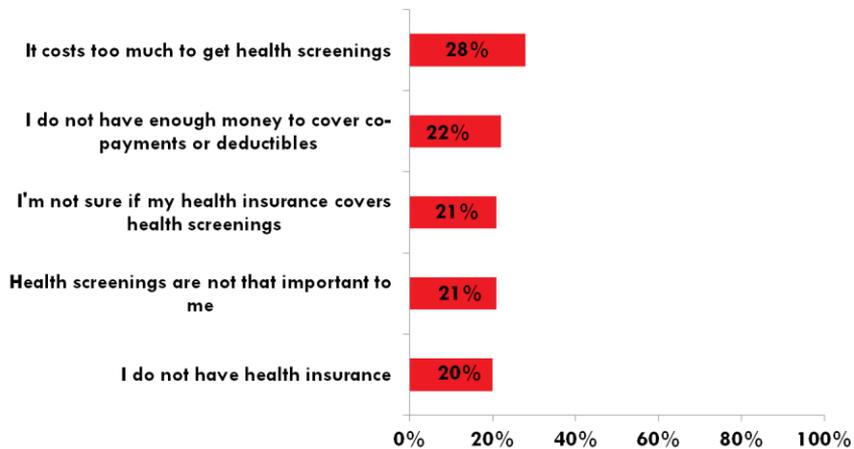
## Importance of Health Practices



## Receipt of Vaccinations or Health Screenings



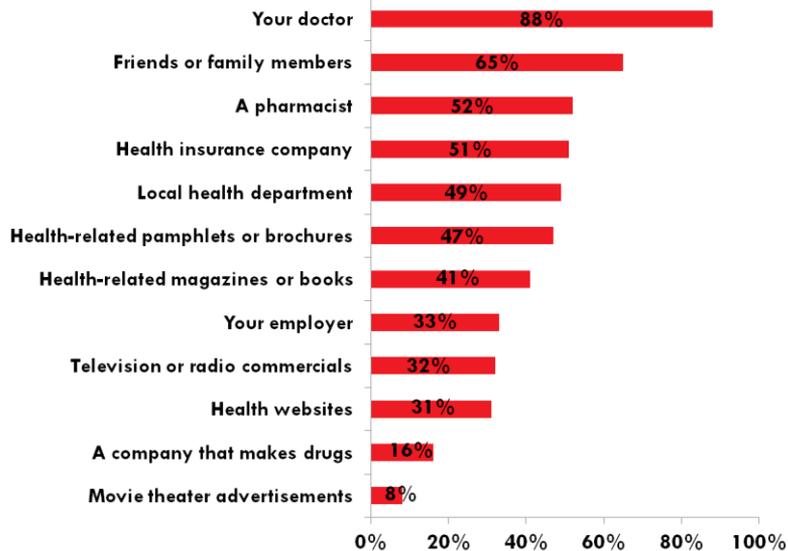
## Reasons for Not Receiving Vaccinations or Health Screenings



## Reasons for Not Receiving Vaccinations or Health Screenings



## Information Sources That Could Influence Decision





**For more information**  
**Teresa A. Keenan**  
**202-434-6274**  
**[tkeenanaarp@aarp.org](mailto:tkeenanaarp@aarp.org)**