**Want to get your health checks done? Make it fun (and other top tips)**

* You promised yourself you’d go to the dentist this year, but you haven’t found the time yet.
* You know 1 in 2 people in the world have undiagnosed diabetes, but you’re probably not one of them.
* You know 40 is the age to start screening for prostate cancer, but you feel nervous about going.

*Does this sound familiar?*

Luckily, with a teaspoon of tips, a pinch of incentives and a sprinkle of behavioural science, you *can* motivate yourself to do those activities that are good for you in the long run. Like getting yearly health screenings. Here’s how:

1. **Plan your health screenings in advance**

Behavioural scientist Katy Milkman recommends making a [cue-based plan](https://edition.cnn.com/2023/01/01/health/how-to-set-new-year-resolutions-wellness/index.html). For example, “I’ll get a dental checkup this year” is too vague. But when you add cues like when and where you’ll do it – “I’ll get a dental checkup on the first Monday in May at my neighborhood dentist” – your goal becomes more specific and more achievable.

Put a health screening calendar, like our **handy guide on what health checks to do and when**, on your fridge to remind you of important health checks and help you plan.

1. **Consider your timing**

Why the first Monday of May? Studies have shown the powerful impact of the “fresh start effect” on goal achievement. A fresh start like a new year, your birthday or even a Monday can give you the encouragement you need to set and achieve your goals. And if your [birthday ends on a 9](https://abcnews.go.com/Health/birthday-years-ending-prompt-big-life-decisions-study/story?id=27033786), for example 29, 39, 49 or 59, you’re more likely to make a life-changing decision for the new decade ahead. So, to the 39-year-old men out there: book your prostate exam for your 40th birthday today!

1. **Book your health screening online**

These days, most doctors and pharmacies have an online booking system in place. Once you’ve decided when and where you’ll do your health screenings, make an appointment online. It’s quick and easy, and there’s the added benefit that most healthcare providers will send you an email or SMS to remind you of your appointment.

1. **Add your own reminder**

A great tip is to add annual reminders of your health checks on your phone or in your diary (or both!). For example, if you plan on doing a Vitality Health Check every year, set an annual reminder so you don’t miss out on your Vitality points – and the amazing rewards that come with it.

1. **Make it more tempting**

Another behavioural nudge we love is called [temptation bundling](https://pubsonline.informs.org/doi/abs/10.1287/mnsc.2013.1784) or combining a task with something you enjoy. Dinesh Govender, CEO of Vitality in South Africa explains how he put temptation bundling to the test: “We’ve made our annual VHC a family experience. I have teenage daughters who join my wife and I for all our checks and we’ve started a tradition where we go to the movies afterwards. I encourage parents to try this. It really works – just as much for me as my kids”.

**Don’t forget the rewards**

“These tips are highly effective when you combine them with your Vitality membership,” says Govender. “A distinguishing feature of Vitality is the way incentives and financial and lifestyle rewards encourage people to make healthier choices a habit and shift behaviours associated with better health.”

**The best part?** Your healthy habits can literally change the world through shared value. “These healthy behaviours have positive effects on insurers and society while they also address the three key areas that have the highest potential to improve your health – nutrition, physical activity and preventive screening,” Govender concludes.