

## Nearly Half of Insured U.S. Adults Don't Know They Should Have an Annual Check-up

BLOOMFIELD, Conn., December 09, 2015 - In a new survey of insured adults conducted by Cigna, 45 percent of Americans say they don't know that they should have an annual check-up - and half are unaware that if they have insurance, there is no cost for the annual check-up. In fact, most Americans are more in tune with when their pets need to have their shots than when they should go for their own check-up.

"Annual check-ups are critical to our personal health. They provide us with an opportunity to check on our most important health numbers such as Body Mass Index (BMI), cholesterol and blood pressure, allowing us to gauge our overall well-being," according to Isaac Martinez, M.D., utilization management medical director at Cigna. "However, many Americans forget they need an annual check-up and many of those who know, don't go. That's why we want people to 'know, go, and take control' when it comes to their health. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that Americans use preventive services at only about half the recommended rate, despite insurance covering 100 percent of these costs.\*"

The CDC preventive care data is reinforced by the results of Cigna's survey, which finds that a third of Americans - 33 percent - say they visit their health care professionals only when a specific health problem arises. Less than half don't realize that the annual check-up also includes vaccinations and immunizations as well as the opportunity to discuss healthy eating and exercise.

Cigna's survey found that Americans are not averse to tracking other numbers and making regular appointments for other activities in their daily lives, however. For example, 85 percent of people with pets say they know when it's time for their pet to visit the veterinarian's office for a shot.

Yet when it comes to their own health, according to the study, only 50 percent of Americans know their blood pressure level - a key barometer for assessing the likelihood of potential heart disease and stroke - and only 20 percent know their biometric numbers (such as BMI), even though keeping one's BMI, cholesterol and blood pressure in check can also help a person save on significant out-of-pocket costs.

According to another recent Cigna [study](#) of 200,000 customers, many people don't know they have health risks that cost money. Sixty-six percent of adults are overweight or obese, but only 18 percent realize it and are trying to lose weight. Meanwhile, in addition to the health benefits of weight loss, this study found the difference of having a BMI of greater than vs. less than 30 can be \$2,460 in total health care costs annually.

"It is essential for all Americans to get their preventive care screenings, which can be discussed at their scheduled check-ups," said Cindy Cooke, DNP, FNP-C, FAANP, president of the American Association of Nurse Practitioners. "Asking your health care professional to give you your biometric numbers and knowing your numbers can help you stay healthier and potentially prevent certain health conditions from developing. This is one of those cases where what we don't know can hurt us. Without scheduled visits with your health care professional, it becomes possible for conditions such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes and obesity to go undetected and therefore, untreated, for extended periods of time."

Annual check-ups were once a part of many American's childhood routines and were viewed as critical yearly milestones, Dr. Martinez explained. "It's time to reassess our yearly habits and re-prioritize our health. If we all paid as much attention to our health as we do other important measures, we would experience a higher quality of life."

Cigna launched a communication campaign this fall, *America Says Ahhh*, to help raise awareness of the importance of preventive care and the annual check-up, and of knowing important vital health numbers. For information, visit <http://www.cigna.com/takecontrol/go/facts>.

To see a summary of Cigna's preventive care survey, visit <http://www.cigna.com/assets/docs/newsroom/9022/preventive-care-report-approved-by-compliance.pdf>.

*\* Preventive care includes health services like screenings, check-ups and patient counseling that are used to help prevent illnesses, disease and other health problems, or to detect illness at an early stage when treatment is likely to work best. Getting recommended preventive services and making healthy lifestyle choices are key steps to good health and well-being. In fact, if everyone in the US received recommended Clinical Preventive Care, 100,000 lives could be saved each year. (Source: <http://www.cdc.gov/prevention/>)*

### **About the Survey**

The Preventive Care study was conducted in partnership with M/A/R/C research. It is a national survey of 1,000 participants between the ages of 25-75 who have health insurance and are decision-makers related to their family's health.\* Interviews were completed during Sept. 24-28, 2015. At a 90 percent confidence level, the margin of error on n=1,000 is +/- 2.6 percent.

*\*To note, the age, gender and ethnicity matched the U.S. census proportions.*

### **About Cigna**

Cigna Corporation (NYSE: CI) is a global health service company dedicated to helping people improve their health, well-being and sense of security. All products and services are provided exclusively by or through operating subsidiaries of Cigna Corporation, including Connecticut General Life Insurance Company, Cigna Health and Life Insurance Company, Life Insurance Company of North America and Cigna Life Insurance Company of New York. Such products and services include an integrated suite of health services, such as medical, dental, behavioral health, pharmacy, vision, supplemental benefits, and other related products including group life, accident and disability insurance. Cigna maintains sales capability in 30 countries and jurisdictions, and has more than 89 million customer relationships throughout the world. To learn more about Cigna®, including links to follow us on Facebook or Twitter, visit [www.cigna.com](http://www.cigna.com).

View source version on businesswire.com: <http://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20151209005332/en/>