The National Cancer Protection Gap

Attendee Resource Guide

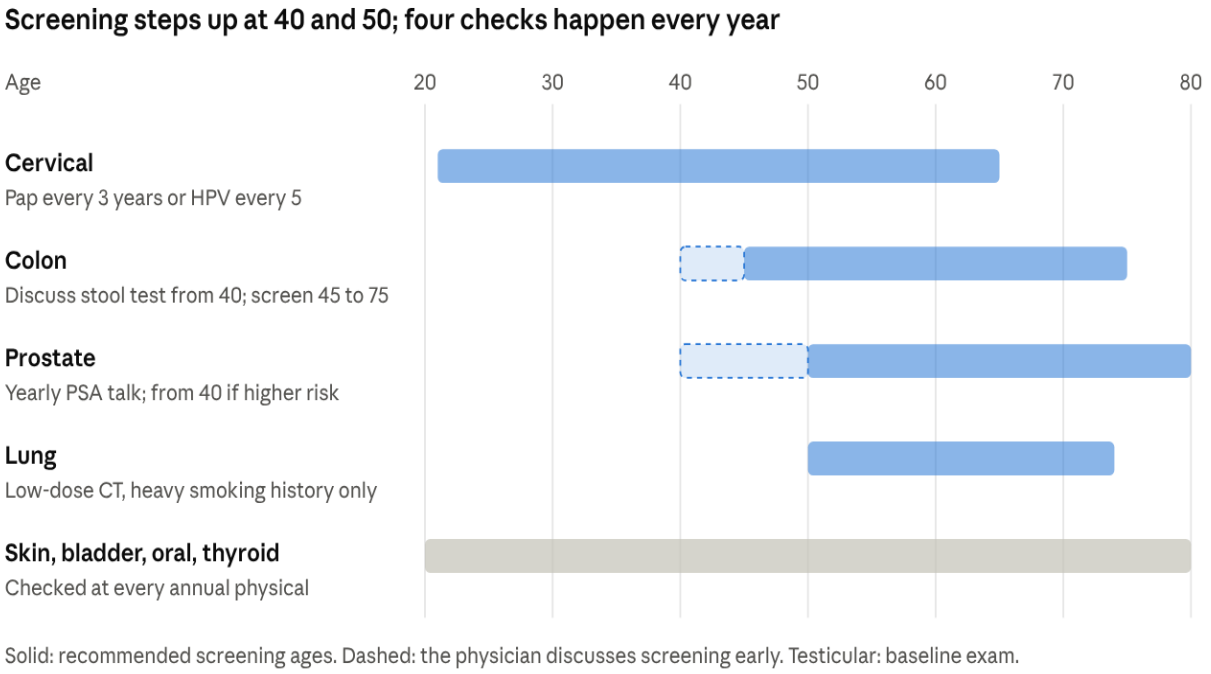
Health: Physicals, Screening and Tobacco

A baseline physical before the first call, then an annual exam, catches cancer early and proves you were healthy going in. Section numbers are from NFPA 1580 (2025).

Physicals

- Baseline medical evaluation before emergency duties, then at least annually, compared against the baseline (11.3.1, 11.3.4).
- The history and annual questionnaire include occupational exposures (11.4.3, 11.5.2).
- Parts of the annual evaluation can be done by the member's own doctor if the full results go to the fire department physician (11.4.2). This option matters for volunteer departments.

Cancer screening in NFPA 1580



NFPA 1580 (2025) §11.7.13 to §11.7.21

What to tell your own doctor (30 seconds)

"I'm a firefighter. The World Health Organization classifies firefighting as carcinogenic to humans. NFPA 1580 recommends extra screening for firefighters, including a yearly skin exam and a urine check for blood. Can we add those, and can you note my firefighting exposure in my chart?"

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Tobacco: a health risk and a claim risk

23 jurisdictions name tobacco in their cancer rules. In 18, tobacco use bars, excludes or reduces the claim; in 5, the employer can use it to rebut. Look-backs run from 5 years (FL, IN, RI) to 15 years (CT), and CO and MO cut benefits 25%.

- Quit all forms, including dip and e-cigarettes (Lavender Ribbon Report, Best Practice 10).
- Document your quit date in your medical record, with any cessation program.
- Answer the annual questionnaire the same way every year.