

### **Dr. Dec's Suggestions regarding COMPLETE PHYSICALS**

We often get requests to book a "Complete Physical". Most commonly, it is those patients over the age of 60 that ask. This was a common occurrence in past years, with my predecessor Dr. Strang, and usually resulted in about a 30+ minute appointment, allowing for reviewing multiple concerns that have built up over 12 months, throwing on a hospital gown, having me do numerous routine physical exam manoeuvres, ordering some routine tests, and perhaps having you back to discuss them. Like much everything else, guidelines have evolved! What has changed? A few of the new recommendations are:

1. ROUTINE YEARLY Complete Physicals are NOT recommended
2. Problems are better addressed in a timely manner instead of "saving" them up to discuss once/year, hence our Advanced Access Booking which aims to have you seen either the same day or the next day
3. We are seeing many of you, many times per year to deal with varying problems and chronic disease monitoring, and if we add up all those visits, it basically covers what we would examine in a complete physical
4. Most routine physical exam manoeuvres do not screen very well for significant disease, especially if there are no symptoms, for example (listening to your heart, looking in your ears or tapping on your reflexes)
5. The push is towards a "**Periodic Health Review**", which may focus on a specific complaint or 2 but mainly aims to address preventative measures, which can include, depending on your stage of life: PAP Smears, Bone Density, Mammograms in females, Prostate Screening in males and Sugar/Cholesterol Screening, Colon Cancer Screening, Immunizations in all
6. A Complete Physical MAY be indicated in someone who has not been seen in several years, especially if they have a general medical complaint
7. Women between the ages of 21-70 are recommended to get a PAP Smear every 3 years (if normal), but one does not require an appointment for a Complete Physical to accomplish that.

So in summary, it is likely that you do not need a complete physical. What you do need is in some cases, is a Periodic Health Assessment, or a Chronic Disease Monitoring Appointment (Diabetes/Depression/Anxiety/Asthma/High Blood Pressure amongst others) or a PAP Smear. Each of these appointments will have a little different structure and will require a more focused physical exam and the recommended ordering of certain appropriate tests or blood work.

I will be happy to discuss with you, in more detail, your regular health needs, as well as provide information regarding these changing