American men are blowing their best chance to head off cancer or spot it early, when it's easiest to treat, a new survey warns.
More than 6 in 10 (65%) men in the nationwide survey said they are behind on at least one routine cancer screening, while nearly 1 in 5 admitted they don't even schedule their own health care appointments.

Those are the key findings from the annual Early Detection Survey conducted by the Prevent Cancer Foundation. Its CEO, Jody Hoyos, calls the implications profound.

It's crucial, she said, to advocate for your health and talk to your health care provider about the routine screenings you need.

"By fostering a culture of self-care and encouraging men to prioritize cancer screenings, we can reduce health disparities and achieve better outcomes," Hoyos added in a foundation news release.

Screenings are available for some of the most common cancers in men—colon, skin (melanoma), oral and prostate cancers, she noted, calling on men to talk to their health care provider about their options.

In the survey, 51% of guys aged 45 or older said knowing about at-home screening options for colon cancer screening makes them more likely to get that check.

And 36% of guys who weren't up to date on routine cancer screenings said they'd be more likely to make them a priority if tests were faster. The foundation said that's important for companies to consider when developing new screening tests.

The foundation shared these screening guidelines for men who are at average risk for cancer:

**Colon:** Men with an average risk for this cancer should begin screening at age 45. Those with an increased risk, including those with a parent,
sibling or child who has had colon cancer, may need to start sooner or get tested more often. Men should ask their doctor about screening options.

**Lung**: Current or former smokers between the ages of 50 and 80 should be screened.

**Oral**: Oral cancers are more common in men than in women. Visit a dentist every six months and ask for an oral cancer exam.

**Prostate**: Men should talk to their health care provider by age 50 about screening. Black men or any men who have had relatives with prostate cancer should begin that conversation in their 40s.

**Skin**: Since men are more likely than women to develop melanoma, the deadliest form of skin cancer, monthly self-exams are important by age 50. Men should bring any changes in moles or suspicious skin areas to a doctor's attention and get a yearly skin check.

**Testicular**: Beginning in their 20s, men should have a testicular exam during their routine physical and learn how to do a self-exam. This will help them recognize changes that they can bring to a doctor's attention. Rates of this cancer are highest in men between 20 and 34 years of age. Testicle checks should continue for as long as the doctor recommends.

**More information**: Johns Hopkins Medicine has a guide to men's health screenings.

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