Medical Xpress

USPSTF: screen all adults for depression in primary care

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(HealthDay)—In an updated draft recommendation released Monday, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force urges that primary care physicians regularly screen for depression in all adult patients (B recommendation).

In 2009, the USPSTF recommended screening adults when supports are in place, and selective screening when such support is not available. The new guidelines eliminate the selective screening and specifically add pregnant and postpartum women.

The Task Force notes that the Patient Health Questionnaire is the most commonly used depression screening tool in the United States. Other depression screening tools include the Hospital Anxiety and Depression

Scales in adults, the Geriatric Depression Scale in older adults, and the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale in postpartum and pregnant women. The Task Force recommends that all positive screening tests should be followed up with additional assessment for severity of depression and comorbid psychological problems (such as anxiety or substance abuse), alternate diagnoses, and medical conditions.

"This could be a checklist that patients fill out in the waiting room, or at home prior to the visit," Kirsten Bibbins-Domingo, M.D., Ph.D., vice chair of the Task Force, told *HealthDay*. "The good thing is we have many instruments, measures that have been studied for screening for depression." Bibbins-Domingo is a professor of medicine, epidemiology, and biostatistics at the University of California, San Francisco.

More information: Evidence Review
Draft Recommendation Statement
Comment on Recommendation

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