



Male Call

By Joe Stein, President



OK men, let's have a heart-to-heart about cars, women, beer and sports, the things we like to talk about. But let's have this chat in the context of developing a checklist designed to help us live longer, healthier lives. What are the top ten things us guys can do to cross the finish line under the checkered flag?

1. **Get an annual physical.** An ounce of prevention prevents a pound of trouble later. Know your BP, PSA, cholesterol and glucose numbers. Most health issues can be addressed less invasively and costly if treated early. If you can't bring yourself to go to the doctor when you are feeling OK, ask yourself this: Would you bring your car in for a 30,000-mile scheduled maintenance even if it is running well?
2. **Do cardio.** The benefits of having a strong heart and burning calories on a regular basis is like having good pitching...you can never have enough.
3. **Exercise your legs.** They are like defensive coordinators, rarely appearing in public...but are the power behind the power. Without strong legs, how can you do your cardio?
4. **Wear sunscreen, sunglasses and hat.** Who wants to be on the injured reserve due to skin cancer?
5. **Be aware of depression.** Because many men have been taught to conceal their emotions, the outward signs of depression are not obvious. According to the CDC, suicide rates are four times higher for men than women. If you are frequently drinking excessively, acting aggressively or feeling hopeless, talk to your doctor. This may be a temporary batting slump, but it is better to be sure.
6. **Watch those carbs.** A man's waist attracts excess fat like blitzing linemen to Rex Grossman. Try to avoid highly refined starchy food. White rice, white bread, pasta, pretzels etc. Choose whole grain alternatives instead. Learn what constitutes a portion and stick with it. Also, did you ever hear of a Scotch belly? A Bordeaux belly? There is a reason it's called a beer belly!

7. **Strengthen your back.** For many of us, it is the weak link in the kinetic chain. After shoveling snow, spreading mulch, playing 18 holes or driving 240 MPH at the Brickyard for a couple of hours, what hurts? Low back extensions, pelvic tilts and abdominal crunches will help keep your back healthy.
8. **Avoid accidents.** According to research published in the *Wall Street Journal*, accidents are the leading cause of death in men until the age of 44. Avoid standing on ladders where it says, “Do not stand here. This is not a step.” Wear your seatbelt and drive carefully
9. **Listen to your wife or significant other.** There is research to show women are significantly more aware of health issues than men. In fact wives are the leading source of health information for many men. A CDC study found that women are twice as likely as men to schedule annual exams. Because they are more in tune with health and caring for others, listen to what they have to say. All this and a great mixed doubles partner, too!
10. **Don’t ignore erectile dysfunction.** In 2006, the *Archives of Internal Medicine* reported a Canadian study of almost 4,000 men. Men with ED were 50% more likely to have diabetes or heart disease.

Guys, think of this list as you would practicing bunting, learning to hit a sac fly, making a routine catch and avoiding base-running mistakes...not so glamorous, but the superstars all do them well. Self maintenance is so...un-guy-like, but it is critical to your success. If you want to play in the Bigs, it’s a necessary part of the game.

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