

7 Subtle Health Warnings You Should Never Ignore

Men are notorious for ignoring health problems. Complaining about aches and pains somehow seems unmanly to many guys. That's one reason men are far more likely than women to avoid going to the doctor, surveys consistently show.

"Three out of four people who have not seen a doctor in more than five years are men," says Will Courtenay, M.D., a San Francisco-area psychotherapist and author of the book "Dying to Be Men."

"Men balk at going to the doctor because they like to see themselves as independent and self-reliant," Dr. Courtenay tells *Newsmax Health*.

This attitude is admirable in many areas of life, but it can be fatal when it comes to health. Here are seven subtle symptoms men should never, ever ignore:

1. Constipation. Many guys take a laxative to try to get past constipation. But the condition can signal a tumor in the lower bowel that's blocking waste from exiting the body. If the situation doesn't clear up after a few days, a doctor's visit is in order. Colorectal cancer is the third-leading cause of cancer-related death in men.

2. Strange-looking freckles. Skin cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in men and women alike. "Skin cancer rates are skyrocketing," says Dr. Courtney. An odd-looking freckle or mole that is new or irregular in shape should always be checked out by a doctor as soon as it is noticed.

3. Chronic indigestion. Occasional heartburn is nothing to worry about, but if a man suffers from chronic acid reflux at least twice weekly he may have gastro-esophageal reflux, or

GERD which can lead to inflammation, bleeding and ulcers of the esophagus. In some cases it can cause esophageal cancer. "The rate of cancer of the esophagus is skyrocketing, so it is essential for a man to have a checkup if he is resorting to antacids to feel comfortable," says Gabe Mirkin, M.D., author of *The Healthy Heart Miracle*.

4. Constant thirst. An unquenchable thirst can signal diabetes. Other symptoms include frequent urination, extreme hunger, unexplained weight loss or gain, nausea and blurred vision. Walter Gaman, M.D., of Executive Medicine of Texas, tells *Newsmax Health* that every man should get a "simple yearly blood test at his doctor's office that can measure glucose levels and diagnose diabetes."

5. Pain when urinating. In women, this pain usually signals a urinary infection. In men, it may be a symptom of enlarged prostate or prostate cancer.

6. Erectile dysfunction. A recent study at the Mayo Clinic found that men who had erectile dysfunction in their 40s or 50s were 50 times more likely to have heart trouble down the road than those who don't. Men who get erectile dysfunction should have a thorough cardiac exam.

7. Snoring. Dr. Courtenay points out that snoring can be an annoyance—especially to a bed partner—but it can also be a sign of sleep apnea, which affects men much more often than women. Men who snore regularly should see a doctor.

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