

One Medical Test Every Man Needs but Isn't Getting

Men who undergo a one-time ultrasound chest screening can greatly reduce their risk from a deadly abdominal aortic aneurysm, but few men undergo the procedure, according to new research.

An aneurysm, in which a key blood vessel to the heart bursts, typically strikes without warning and is often fatal unless emergency surgery is performed immediately. But the new research, reported by the German Institute for Quality and Efficiency in Health Care, finds ultrasound screening can identify men at risk, allowing doctors to intervene before the condition becomes life threatening.

The new analysis compared the results of four studies that tracked the benefits of one-time screening via ultrasound with a different screening strategy or no screening.

Three studies included only men aged 65 years or older; one also included women, but they only comprised 6.8 percent of the study population.

The results showed screening can reduce the frequency of ruptures in men, and the researchers said they believe the same is true for women. As a result the researchers said men over 65, and women at risk for cardiovascular problems, should undergo one-time screenings.

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