

By Lacy Wolff, ERS Health Promotion Administrator

When we feel healthy, we wish for many things like money, success, travel, etc. When we are sick we wish for only one thing, and that is to feel better.

Every time a family member or I am ill, it becomes glaringly obvious that our health (mental & physical) is the most important thing in life.

But doing ALL the things that keep us healthy – like physical activity, eating well, managing stress, and getting enough sleep – can feel like an impossible task.

If we step back for a moment and focus in on the one thing that is the most important to support our health, it may be our annual preventive exam.

You may think “I don’t have time” or “I don’t feel bad, so why should I go to the doctor?” And you are not alone! More than half of our state’s workforce did not receive their annual preventive exam in 2021. There are many reasons why people **do not** make time to go to the doctor. Here are a few reasons why this is an incredibly important step toward building and maintaining our health:

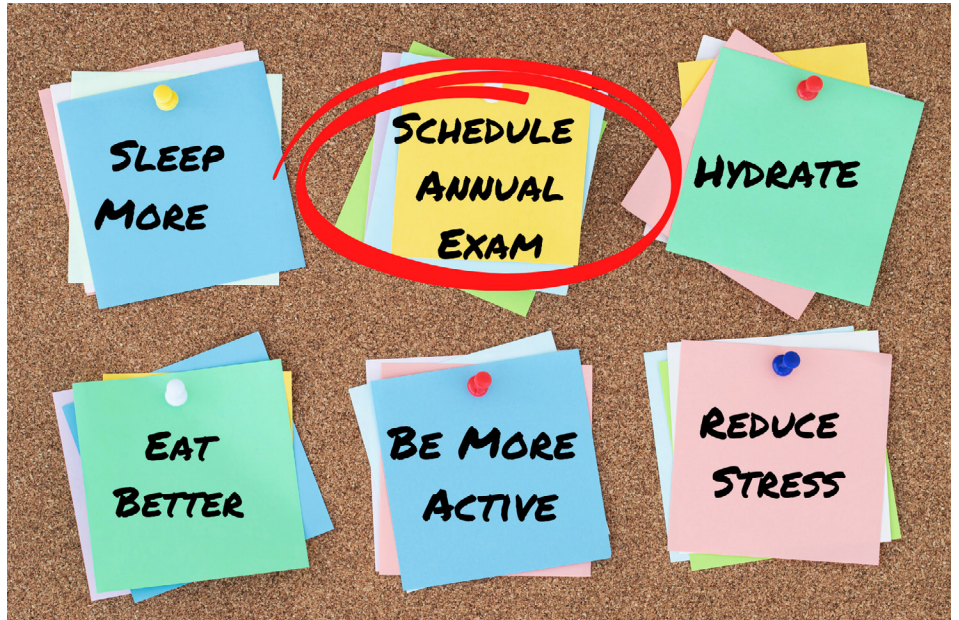
The “Why”: prevention is key

Your annual exam can:

- help you to understand your current health status and the behaviors that are driving it and
- allow you to see the yearly trends in your health history, so that you can make necessary changes before it is too late.

For example, hypertension (high blood pressure) is the silent killer and can cause major damage and lead to strokes if not managed. Also, you cannot “feel” high cholesterol, but it is risk factor for heart disease. These things must be measured to get a clear picture of our health status.

Chronic conditions, like diabetes, hypertension and high cholesterol, are more likely to develop as we age. The good news is that if we visit the doctor regularly (and annual exams are no cost under our health plan), we could potentially be able to stave off or effectively manage our conditions. If you wonder how that works, [HealthSelectSM](#) offers information and examples about how regular doctor visits can help ensure a healthier future.



Additionally, you may be able to earn time off through your employer for completing your annual exam. Check with your HR department or Wellness Coordinator to find out if Wellness Leave is an incentive offered through your agency.

How do I schedule an appointment?

If you haven’t already, schedule an appointment today with your Primary Care Provider for your annual preventive exam. If you don’t have a Primary Care Provider and are covered by a HealthSelect insurance plan, you can select one through the [HealthSelect of Texas website](#) or by calling a BCBSTX Personal Health Assistant toll-free at **(800) 252-8039 (TTY: 711)** Monday–Friday 7 a.m. – 7 p.m. CT, and Saturday 7 a. m. – 3 p.m. CT.

Alternatively, Capitol Complex Employees who participate in a HealthSelect plan can schedule a Catapult Check-up in the REJ Conference Center between February 14th-18th from 8:30 a.m. -3:30 p.m. CT. Learn more about this convenient way to complete your annual exam and register through the [Capitol Complex February Event link](#).

I hope you will join me (collectively and individually) in taking a proactive approach to make a difference in your life and in the health of the state’s workforce. Let’s find a way to do the one thing (our annual exam), that can support what’s most important to us all: our health.