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5 DIY Health Checks that Could Save Your Life

By [SHAPE magazine](#) | [Healthy Living](#) – Fri, Feb 24, 2012 12:57 PM EST

These five DIY checks could save your life.

Today there are tests for almost everything. Luckily, these five checks don[...] require waiting in line to see a doctor or filling a prescription that may or [...] not be covered by your insurance. Read on for five DIY health checks you [...] perform that might just save your life:

1. Urine: Your first trip to the toilet in the morning can detect a lot more [...] pregnancy or a urinary tract infection. More than 70 markers in your urin[...] determine how your entire body is functioning and are key to preventing [...] degenerative diseases, unknown gluten intolerance, low antioxidant level[...] make you vulnerable to oxidative stress, and more, says Nancy Guberti, c[...] nutritionist and healthy lifestyle coach.

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For instance, "accumulation of specific organic acids in urine often signals a metabolic inhibition or block," Guberti s[...] The abnormality could mean that you're vitamin deficient.

2. Your weight: Unexplained weight gain and weight loss can also signal a major issue with your health, says Dr. J[...] Chen, an integrative physician and health expert. Don't ignore them. If you unexpectedly gain a lot of weight, this ca[...] hypothyroidism, adrenal disorders like Cushing's syndrome, fluid retention as in congestive heart failure or renal dise[...] and pregnancy.

If you unexpectedly lose a lot of weight, this can signify cancer, hyperthyroidism, autoimmune diseases, chronic dise[...] and depression.

3. Your teeth: Many people don't realize the importance of a dental checkup. Dr. Lucy Slutsky, a general dentist ba[...] West Orange, NJ, points out, "Oral hygiene and checkups are vital because dental problems can often be a sign of oth[...] health-related problems tied to the heart, lungs, digestive system, or other parts of the body."

Dental checkups can also give dentists the opportunity to check for early signs of oral cancer.

Your skin: You should be in the habit of checking your skin at least once a month to look for changing moles or non[...] lesions, says Dr. Tim Abou-Sayed, board-certified plastic surgeon. "Remember that the only 'good tan' is one you are [...] with that comes naturally; when you get that tan from sunning yourself at the beach, you are actually damaging your [...] with the sun's radiation," Abou-Sayed adds.

"A melanoma, which can be fatal, may begin as something so seemingly innocent as a slightly darkened mole, so a sin
self-exam of the skin can alert you that you need to go to a dermatologist for a full screening."

Dr. Glenn Kolansky, board-certified dermatologist in Red Bank, NJ, suggests you use a mirror for the back or hard to
places, or have a significant other assist you. "It is also important to realize that a skin exam is only good on the date i
performed. Growths can change a day, a week, or a month later," he says.

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5. Your home: Don't forget to also check your surroundings-it indicate health issues and even save your life. "To liv
healthier lifestyle, it is extremely important to maintain a 'healthy home' and be aware of toxins and other irritants th
exist in your living space and make you feel unhealthy," says Caroline Blazovsky, national healthy home expert and ce
mold remediator.

"If you notice headaches, congestion, respiratory irritation, asthma, or allergies, you should have your home tested fo
allergens, and chemicals. Molds, for example, can produce spores, mycotoxins, and MVOCs (chemicals produced by
which can give you an array of symptoms and cause you to feel unwell."

Blazovsky suggests to monitor such conditions every few years to every year to see if your home is within safe limits. Y
even try a mold test kit of your own like EXAMINAIR.

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