

**MBS Item Descriptor for Item 717
45 Year Old Health Check**

Category 1 - ATTENDANCES

717 †

45 YEAR OLD HEALTH CHECK

Attendance by a medical practitioner (including a general practitioner but not including a specialist or consultant physician) **AT A PLACE OTHER THAN A HOSPITAL** to undertake a health check for a patient between the age of 45 and 49 (inclusive) at risk of developing a chronic disease.

Benefits are payable on **one** occasion only for each eligible patient.

Fee: \$100.00

Benefit: 100% = \$100.00

(See para [A.21](#) of explanatory notes to this Category)

Explanatory Notes for MBS Item 717

A.21.124 45 YEAR OLD HEALTH CHECK (Item 717)

The purpose of this item is to support general practitioners (GPs) to focus on the health needs of their patients around 45 years of age who are at risk of developing a chronic disease. The aim of the health check is to assist with detection and prevention of chronic disease and enable early intervention strategies to be put in place where appropriate.

Eligible Population

A.21.125 The health check is targeted at people who are between 45 and 49 years of age (inclusive) who are at risk of developing a chronic disease.

Risk Factors

A.21.126 A patient must be at risk of developing a chronic disease. A chronic disease or condition is one that has been or is likely to be present for at least six months, including but not limited to asthma, cancer, cardiovascular illness, diabetes mellitus, mental health conditions, arthritis and musculoskeletal conditions.

A.21.127 The decision about whether an individual is at risk of developing a chronic disease rests with the clinical judgment of the GP, but a specific risk factor must be identified. Factors that the GP may consider include, but are not limited to:

- lifestyle risk factors, such as smoking, physical inactivity, poor nutrition or alcohol misuse;
- biomedical risk factors, such as high cholesterol, high blood pressure, impaired glucose metabolism or excess weight; or
- family history of a chronic disease.

A.21.128 Where possible, practices are encouraged to identify whether a patient is at risk of developing a chronic disease through normal patient management and examination of patient records.

A.21.129 In circumstances where the GP is unsure whether the patient is at risk of developing a chronic disease, for example, because the patient is new to the practice, the GP may choose either to:

- determine whether the patient has a risk factor and, if so, undertake the health check in the same visit (billed under item 717); or

- determine whether the patient has a risk factor as part of a consultation (billed under the appropriate attendance item) and, if so, undertake the health check during a subsequent visit (billed under item 717).

If the patient does not have a risk factor, the appropriate attendance item would be billed.

Limits

A.21.130 A Medicare rebate is payable for this item only once for any eligible patient. This item is not an annual health check.

A.21.131 If a GP is unsure whether a patient has already received this service, they may call Medicare Australia, with the patient present, on 132 011.

A.21.132 The item does not apply to admitted patients of a hospital or day-hospital facility.

Eligible practitioners

A.21.133 This item can be claimed by a medical practitioner, including a general practitioner but not including a specialist or consultant physician. In these notes, the term “GP” is used as a generic reference to a medical practitioner able to claim this item.

A.21.134 The health check should generally be undertaken by the patient’s “usual” doctor, that is, the GP who has provided the majority of services to the patient in the past 12 months, or is likely to provide the majority of services in the following 12 months.

Components of the health check

A.21.135 The health check must include:

- information collection, including taking a patient history and undertaking examinations and investigations as required;
- making an overall assessment of the patient;
- interventions as indicated; and
- providing advice and information to the patient.

Information Collection

A.21.136 The health check must include taking a patient history (if one does not already exist) or updating an existing history. The examination should be tailored to the patient’s individual needs and risk factors. Investigations should be undertaken or arranged as clinically indicated, in accordance with relevant guidelines (see below).

Assessment of Patient

A.21.137 The health check must include an overall assessment of the patient's health, based on the patient history, examinations and the results of any investigations. This could also include an assessment of the patient's readiness to make lifestyle changes.

Interventions

A.21.138 Where appropriate, arrangements need to be put in place for referrals and follow-up of any problems identified.

Advice and information to the patient

A.21.139 The patient must be provided with advice and information as part of the health check. This should include advice on strategies to achieve lifestyle and behaviour changes where appropriate, utilising, in particular, the Lifescrpts resources.

Role of the GP

A.21.140 The GP is responsible for the overall health check provided to the patient. The GP is expected to take a primary role in the following activities:

- Reviewing and analysing the information collected.
- Making an overall assessment of the patient.
- Undertaking and arranging investigations.
- Making referrals and identifying appropriate follow-up.
- Providing advice to the patient.

Role of the practice nurse and other health professionals

A.21.141 Practice nurses, Aboriginal Health Workers and other health professionals may assist GPs in performing the health check, in accordance with accepted medical practice and under the supervision of the GP.

This may include activities associated with:

- identifying eligible patients through examination of patient records and patient information systems used within the practice;

- information collection (such as measuring height, weight and blood pressure);
- providing patients with information about recommended interventions at the direction of the GP (such as information about community resources and support services in the local area, referral options).

Guidelines

A.21.142 In considering and addressing risk factors, GPs are encouraged to utilise relevant guidelines and resources, such as:

- the RACGP publications: *SNAP - a population health guide to behavioural risk factors in general practice*; *Putting Prevention into Practice* (the Green Book); and *Guidelines for Preventive Activities in General Practice* (the Red Book).
- the National Health and Medical Research Council's publication *Overweight and Obesity in Adults: A Guide for General Practitioners*.
- the Department of Health and Ageing's *Lifescrpts* guidelines and evidence cards, assessment tools and prescription pads.

Relationship with other items

A.21.143 This health check item cannot be claimed in conjunction with another GP attendance item on the same day, except where this is clinically required.

A.21.144 For patients with an existing chronic condition, the Chronic Disease Management (CDM) items (721-731) provide a suite of items for the management and review of chronic conditions. Where a patient has an existing chronic condition, it is up to the clinical judgment of the GP whether the patient should receive a health check under this item or be managed through other services.

A.21.145 Indigenous people are able to access a specific health check under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Adult Health Check item (710). GPs are encouraged to use item 710 where appropriate. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people may also receive a health check under this item if they meet the patient eligibility requirements.