

Are you due for a 50,000 Mile Check-up?

It's estimated that Baby Boomers have walked an estimated 50,000 miles during their lifetime. Just like you'd take your car in for preventive maintenance when it hits that milestone, your body needs the same type of care in order to keep running. That's why Good Samaritan Hospital created a convenient 50,000 Mile Check-Up for people.

"Many of us take better care of our cars than we do ourselves, because we're too busy to think about our health, and, if we feel OK, we don't want to spare the time," said Matt Goldstein, Chief of Preventive Health at Good Samaritan Hospital's Good Health Center.

"The 50,000 Mile Check-up," the physician assistant continued, "is a quick, convenient, head-to-toe screening designed to give participants a good sense of their health and what they can do to maintain or improve it."

This comprehensive health screening, offered for \$50, is designed for people in their 50s and 60s. Good Samaritan has offered the 50,000 Mile Check-up for a little more than 18 months, and done more than 750 screenings, some which have been life-saving.

Warren "Mac" McElroy, for example, appeared to be in good health at age 63. He went for a 50,000 Mile Check-up after his wife Vicky heard about it on the hospital's on-hold message. She wanted him to have his vision and hearing checked, so it was a one-stop trip.

McElroy said that he "complained and moaned and groaned about getting the check-up. I hadn't had a physical in a long time. I figured they would do a bunch of tests and they would just figure out that I'm 63 and that's it."

His electrocardiogram results, however, warranted a referral to a cardiologist, who determined that McElroy needed a cardiac catheterization. That procedure was halted when he was found to have a 90 percent heart blockage. McElroy was sent to

Union Memorial Hospital, where he underwent quadruple bypass surgery Aug. 17. Five months later, he is feeling fine and grateful, for listening to his wife.

The two-hour 50,000 Mile Check-Up is comprised of a full battery of services, including a medical history review, vision exam and hearing test, comprehensive laboratory tests, comprehensive heart screening, vascular screening, bone density test, lung capacity screening, prostate screening for men, and counseling.

Health and fitness specialists and nurses review the results for abnormalities.

“When the findings show something,” Goldstein said, “we send them back to their primary care doctor. If they don’t have a doctor, we can get them a referral and we’ll make them an appointment.”

Patients receive a full report and recommendations for follow-up care. A registered nurse will call within a week of the check-up to review the results and answer any questions.

“This test is for people who have taken care of someone all their lives and not taken care of themselves,” Goldstein said. “There are a lot of diseases out there where the findings in a screening show that even if you don’t have it yet, if you keep up your current lifestyle, you could get it”

Goldstein cites examples such as pre-diabetes, which can be prevented from developing into full-blown diabetes with diet changes and weight loss. The 50,000 Mile Check-up can also detect signs of early osteoporosis, which can be slowed by exercise and vitamin supplements. Many other conditions, such as high blood pressure and thyroid problems, can cause problems if left untreated.

“Then there are the silent killers,” Goldstein said. “You don’t necessarily have to feel bad for something to show up. Fifty percent of people who die from coronary artery disease never showed signs. Mr. McElroy is the perfect example of the 50 percent that would have found out the wrong way that they had coronary artery disease.”

For more information, visit www.goodsamisgoodhealth.org, or call 410-GOOD-SAM to schedule a 50,000 Mile Check-up.