

# On portfolios of preventive decisions for multiple health risks - Evidence from US data

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**Abstract:** Using the U.S. Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) survey dataset, this paper analyses the determinants of the number of individual preventive activities. It focuses both on individual characteristics driving the composition of a portfolio of preventive activities, in particular health-related information, and the interactions between different forms of preventive activities. Our results show the importance of information-related variables in driving preventive activities, in particular awareness of illness, access to information, having a general practitioner and the typology of information provided by health professionals. However, when we segregate preventive activities into groups, results differ according to the type of preventive activities considered, being behavioural or medicalised preventive activities. Regarding the interactions between the various types of preventive activities, we show that vaccinations tend to be performed together with screening activities and to a lower extent with exercising. Finally, when it comes to pairs of preventive activities targeting different risks, mammography and pap test tend to be performed together. Our findings can offer some valuable insights in terms of prevention-oriented policies. In particular, they highlight the role and quality of health information in driving preventive activities as not solely the role of health professionals is primordial in influencing preventive activities but also the type of information communicated.

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