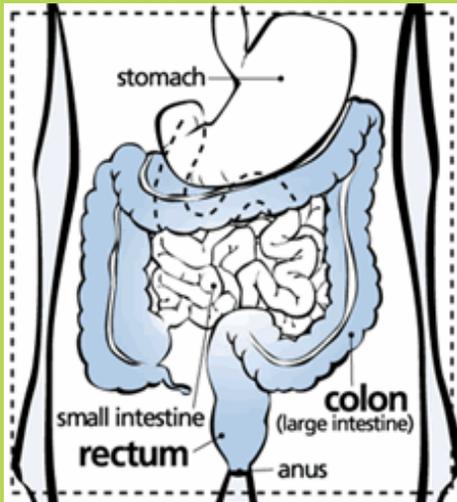


Colorectal Cancer



Map of the colon and rectum



What is colorectal cancer?

Colorectal cancer is a type of cancer that starts as a tiny growth or polyp in the colon (large intestine) and rectum. This type of cancer happens most often in men and women over the age of 50.

Should I be screened?

You should be screened for colorectal cancer if:

- You are over 50 years old.
- If you are younger than 50 years old *and* . . .
 - are African American;
 - have parents, siblings, or children with colon growths (polyps) or colorectal cancer; or
 - have a digestive system disease such as ulcerative colitis or Crohn’s disease.

What are the signs?

- Blood in your poop
- Soft or watery poop
- Belly pain for no clear reason
- Losing weight for no clear reason
- Hard to poop or feeling like you are “plugged up”
- No signs at all!

If you have any of these signs of colorectal cancer, are over the age of 50, or have close family members with a history of colorectal cancer – don’t wait to get screened. Screening could save your life!

Turn the page to learn more . . .



**Find cancer early and survive –
Get screened for colorectal cancer!**



Colorectal Cancer



How do I stop colorectal cancer before it starts?

Get Screened

- Start screening at age 50.
- Start colorectal screening before age 50 if you:
 - are African American;
 - have parents, siblings, or children with colon growths (polyps) or colorectal cancer; or
 - have a digestive system disease such as ulcerative colitis or Crohn's disease.

Eat Right



- Eat fresh fruit and vegetables.
- Look for foods with whole grains.
- Eat a low-fat diet.

Get Active!

- Get active for 20 minutes three to four days each week.
- Walk, garden, or climb stairs to fight cancer!



Stay away from drugs you don't need



- Never use tobacco.
- Drink less alcohol less often.

**Plan time to get screened today,
it can save your life!**



Colorectal Cancer Screening



A tiny growth or polyp on the wall of the colon (large intestine)

Why should I get screened?

Colorectal cancer starts as tiny growths or polyps on the wall of your colon. Getting screened gives doctors a chance to find these small growths and take them out before they turn into cancer – giving you a better chance to beat cancer!

Screening at home

There are two types of colorectal cancer screening tests that can be taken in your house. These tests check for blood in your poop.

▪ **Fecal Occult Blood Test (FOBT)**

- To get ready for this test, your doctor may ask you to change what you eat and what medicines you are taking.
- At your house, you use a small wooden stick to get a small sample of your poop onto the test paper.
- Then, you send the test paper to a lab to be tested.

▪ **Fecal Immunochemical Test (FIT)**

- There are no diet or medicine changes needed for this test.
- At your house, you use a wooden stick to get a small sample of your poop onto the test paper.
- Then, you send the testing paper to a lab to be tested.

If blood is found in your poop, you may have small growths or polyps in your colon that need to be taken out before they turn into cancer.

**Make time to get screened today,
it can save your life!**



Colorectal Cancer Screening

Screening at a hospital or clinic

Colonoscopy

- During a *colonoscopy*, the doctor uses a long, thin, tube with a video camera on the end to look at the entire colon.
- If small growths (polyps) are found, the doctor is able to take them out before they turn into cancer.

Flexible Sigmoidoscopy

- During a *flexible sigmoidoscopy*, the doctor uses a shorter, thin, tube to look at the lower third of the colon.
- If small growths (polyps) are found, the patient may need a colonoscopy at a later time to remove them.

Double Contrast Barium Enema

- A *double contrast barium enema* is a test for people who cannot have a *colonoscopy* or *sigmoidoscopy*.
- At a health center, the patient is given a barium enema. The barium, a white chalky liquid, is put into the patient's rectum and coats the inside walls of the colon to make small growths easy to see.
- If growths (polyps) are found, a *colonoscopy* may be needed at a later time to remove them.

**For more information about
colorectal cancer call: 1-800-237-1225**



**Plan time to get screened today,
it can save your life!**



Brought to you by the Iowa Department of Public Health – Chronic Disease Prevention and Management Bureau by a grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

This material was adapted from the Nebraska Colon Cancer Screening Program.

