

## Colorectal Cancer Screening

Screening tests are used to spot a disease early, before you have symptoms.

Several different screening tests can be used to find polyps or colorectal cancer. Each can be used alone, or sometimes in combination with another test. The U.S. Preventive Services TaskForce (USPSTF) recommends colorectal cancer screening for men and women aged 45–75.

Talk to your health care provider about which test or tests are right for you. The decision to be screened after age 75 should be made on an individual basis. If you are older than 75, ask your health care provider if you should be screened.

## Is Testing Covered?

Depending on your plan, some or all of these screening tests are likely to be covered benefits. A copayment may be required. If you have questions about your coverage, please call our Customer Service Department at the phone number listed on your member identification card.



The information contained in this brochure is not intended to provide medical advice or to take the place of medical care. Any questions you have should be brought to the attention of your health care provider.

### Resources:

For more information visit:

**U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF)**  
[uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org](https://uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org)

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**  
[www.cdc.gov/screenforlife](https://www.cdc.gov/screenforlife)  
1 (800) CDC- INFO.

**National Cancer Institute**  
[www.cancer.gov](https://www.cancer.gov)

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Atención: Si habla español, contamos con ayuda gratuita de idiomas disponible para usted. Consulte el documento adjunto para ver las formas en que puede comunicarse con nosotros.

注意：如果您说中文，我们可为您提供免费的语言协助。请参见随附的文件以获取我们的联系方式。

## Breaking Out of Your Comfort Zone.

**COLORECTAL CANCER:**  
Testing could save your life.



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# It's the Second Leading Cancer Killer

Colorectal cancer is the second leading cancer killer in both men and women combined in the United States. Colorectal cancer is a “silent” disease. Precancerous polyps and early-stage colorectal cancer do not always result in symptoms. This means that someone could have colorectal cancer and not know it until the cancer is advanced and difficult to cure.

Colon cancer, if found and treated early before symptoms develop, has a high cure rate. Most colon cancers start as non-cancerous growths called polyps. If polyps are removed, cancer may be prevented. That is why having a screening test is so important.

If everyone aged 45 years or older had regular screening tests, at least 60 percent of the deaths from this cancer could be avoided.

## What Are the Symptoms?

Some people with polyps or colorectal cancer may develop symptoms. These symptoms may include:

- Blood in or on your stool
- Stomach pain, aches, or cramps that do not go away
- Unexplained weight loss
- Change in bowel habits
- Change in stool consistency

You and your health care provider can work together to maintain your good health. Your chances of staying healthy increase if you take care of yourself, visit your health care provider regularly and talk to him or her about any symptoms that may signal medical problems. It's always better to prevent illness than to treat it.

If you have not been screened or if you are not sure if you are up to date with your screenings, call your health care provider to schedule a visit.



Other tests may be available. Talk to your health care provider about the best screening options for you.

## Who Gets Colorectal Cancer?

Both men and women equally, of all ages and nationalities can get colorectal cancer. However, the risk for getting colorectal cancer increases with age, and is most often found in people 45 or older. Other risk factors may include:

- Obesity
- Physical inactivity
- Excessive alcohol use
- High fat diet
- Tobacco use

## Are You at High Risk?

For some, the risk for colorectal cancer may be higher than average if:

- You or a close relative have had colorectal polyps or colorectal cancer.
- You have inflammatory bowel disease.
- You are African American, Native American, or a member of another ethnic group that may be at increased risk; you should speak to your health care provider to begin screening five to ten years earlier than age 45.

Colorectal Cancer Screening Tests	How Often
<b>Colonoscopy:</b> This is similar to a flexible sigmoidoscopy (see below), except the doctor uses a longer, thin, flexible, lighted tube to check for polyps or cancer inside the rectum and the entire colon. During the test, the doctor can find and remove most polyps and some cancers.	This test is usually done every ten years.
<b>Stool Tests:</b>	
<b>Fecal Immunochemical Test (FIT Test):</b> This test uses antibodies to find blood in the stool. You receive a test kit from your health care provider. It's important to follow the instructions provided to you for this test. Then you return the test to the health care provider or a lab, where stool samples are checked for blood.	This test should be done every year. Follow up colonoscopy should be done if you have a positive or inconclusive test result.
<b>Stool-DNA Test:</b> This uses a single stool sample, collected at home and sent to a lab, to detect abnormal cells and blood hidden in stool.	This test should be done every three years. Follow up colonoscopy should be done if you have a positive or inconclusive test result.
<b>Flexible Sigmoidoscopy:</b> The doctor puts a short, thin, flexible, lighted tube into your rectum and checks for polyps or cancer inside the rectum and lower third of the colon. This test may be used in combination with the Fecal Occult Blood Test (FOBT) or FIT Test.	This test should be done every five years.