

What is colon cancer screening?

Colorectal cancer almost always develops from abnormal growths or polyps in the colon or rectum. Screening tests can find these growths, which can be removed before they turn into cancer.

What are the signs of colon cancer?

It's important to get regular screenings for colorectal cancer. Polyps may not show signs but could still be present. Signs may include:

- A change in bowel habits.
- Blood during a bowel movement.
- Diarrhea, constipation or feeling that the bowel does not empty all the way.
- Abdominal pain, aches or cramps that do not go away.
- Weight loss for unknown reasons.

These signs can occur with other illnesses that are not cancer, so please discuss them with your doctor.



When should I receive colorectal cancer screening?

View guidelines from the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Current screening guidelines	
Under age 45	<p>Patients younger than 45 may need to be tested if they have the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inflammatory bowel disease such as Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis. • Personal or family history of colorectal cancer or polyps. • Genetic syndrome such as familial adenomatous polyposis (FAP) or hereditary non-polyposis colorectal cancer (Lynch syndrome). <p>Discuss with your physician to determine:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When to begin screening. • The right screening for you. • How often you should be tested.
Ages 45-75	<p>Patients should receive one the following screening tests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colonoscopy • Flexible Sigmoidoscopy • Stool tests (guaiac-based fecal occult blood test; fecal immunochemical test; or FIT DNA, also referred to as the stool DNA test). <p>Discuss options with your physician and consult the CDC for more information.</p>
Ages 75+	<p>Decisions regarding screening should be made on an individual basis and discussed with your doctor.</p>

Sources: [U.S. Preventive Services Task Force \(2021\)](#), [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#).



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