

**MARCH 2021**



## 50% OF COLON CANCER DEATHS COULD HAVE BEEN PREVENTED WITH EARLY DETECTION

1 in 3 eligible adults are not getting screened. Colon cancer begins in the large intestine - the final part of the digestive tract. It usually begins in the colon as small, noncancerous clumps of cells called polyps. Over time these polyps can become colon cancers. Regular screening tests starting at age 45 help prevent colon cancer by identifying and removing polyps before they turn into cancer.



## COLORECTAL CANCER MONTH

FACTORS THAT MAY INCREASE YOUR RISK OF COLON CANCER INCLUDE:



**Older Age.** Most people with colon cancer are older than 50. Colon cancer in people younger than 50 has been increasing, but doctors aren't sure why.



**Inflammatory Intestinal Conditions.** Ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease can increase your risk.



**Family History of Colon Cancer.** You're more likely to develop colon cancer if you have a blood relative who has had the disease.



**Low-Fiber, High-Fat Diet.** Colon cancer and rectal cancer may be associated with a diet low in fiber, high in fat and calories.



**A Sedentary Lifestyle.** People who are inactive are more likely to develop colon cancer.



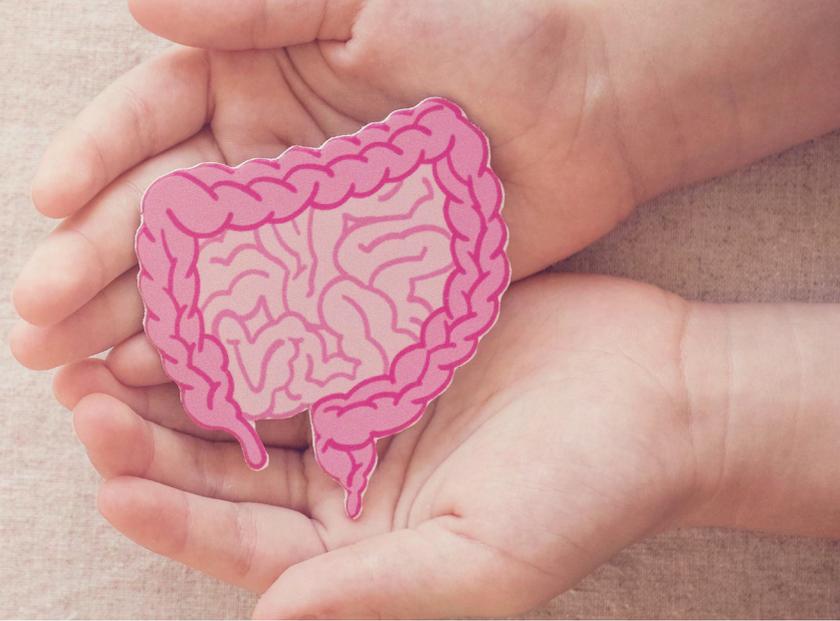
**Diabetes.** People with diabetes or insulin resistance have an increased risk of colon cancer.



**Obesity.** People who are obese have an increased risk of colon cancer and an increased risk of dying of colon cancer compared to normal weight.



**Smoking & Alcohol.** People who smoke and/or have heavy use of alcohol are at increased risk.



## SCREENING METHODS

### COLONOSCOPY

Done under sedation. Uses a tube with a light and camera to detect polyps. Polyps can be removed during the procedure if found.

### FECAL IMMUNOCHEMICAL TEST OR OCCULT BLOOD TEST (FIT OR FOBT)

Tests for blood that may come from a tumor or polyp.

### STOOL DNA

Tests for abnormal DNA and blood in stool.

### FLEXIBLE SIGMOIDOSCOPY

Done at a doctor's office with no sedation. Only views the left part of the colon, may miss tumors developing on the right side.

For more info on colon cancer screening: <https://www.ccalliance.org/blog/prevention/is-colorectal-cancer-preventable-with-screening>



## COLORECTAL CANCER SYMPTOMS

IF YOU HAVE ANY OF THESE SYMPTOMS OR A FAMILY HISTORY, SEE A DOCTOR:



### HAVE YOU SEEN A CHANGE IN YOUR BOWEL HABITS?

This includes constant or intermittent diarrhea and/or constipation, a change in the consistency of your stool, or more narrow stools than usual.



### DO YOU HAVE PERSISTENT ABDOMINAL DISCOMFORT?

Cramps, gas, or pain and/or feeling full, bloated, or a feeling like your bowel is not completely empty. Nausea and/or vomiting can also be a symptom.



### DO YOU HAVE RECTAL BLEEDING?

Is there blood in your stool? The blood can be bright red, or the stool may be black and tarry or brick red.



### DO YOU FEEL WEAK OR FATIGUED?

May come with anemia or a low red blood cell count and unexplained weight loss.