



Colorectal Cancer

What is Colorectal Cancer?

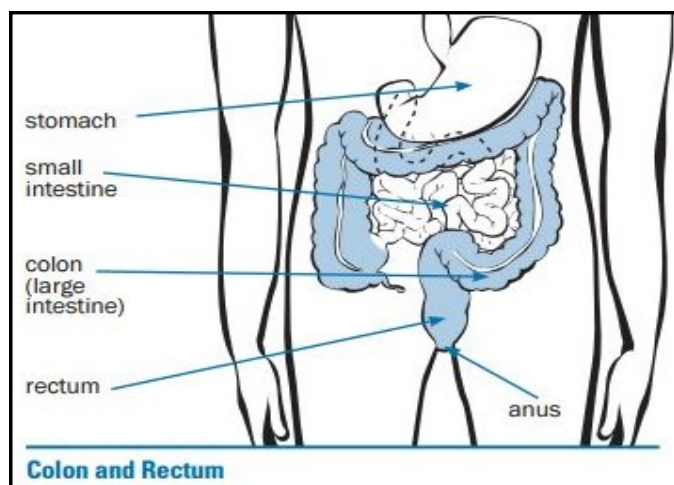


Photo source: Centers Disease and Control

Colorectal cancer is cancer that occurs in the colon or rectum. Sometimes it is called colon cancer. The colon is the large intestine or large bowel. The rectum is the passageway that connects the colon to the anus.

Third Most Common Cancer in the US

In 2015, there were over 90,000 new cases of colorectal cancer in the United States. Colorectal cancer is the third leading cause of cancer-related deaths in the US, but it doesn't have to be. If everyone aged 50 years or older had regular screening tests, at least 60 percent of deaths from this cancer could be avoided. If you or a loved one is age 50 or older, please consider getting screened for colon cancer.

Who Gets Colorectal Cancer?

- Both men and women.
- Most often found in people 50 or older.
- The risk increases with age.

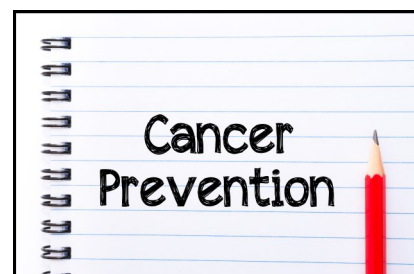
Are You at High Risk?

Your 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 have a genetic syndrome such as familial adenomatous polyposis (FAP) or hereditary non-polyposis colorectal cancer.

Screening Saves Lives

If you're 50 or older, a colorectal cancer screening could save your life.



Colorectal cancer usually starts from polyps, or unusual growth, in the colon or rectum. Over time, some polyps can turn into cancer.

Colon cancer screenings can find polyps, so they can be removed before they turn into cancer. Screenings also find colorectal cancer early. When it is found early, there is a greater chance of being cured.



To learn more, visit www.gptchb.org or visit us on social media.





Colorectal Cancer

Colorectal Cancer Can Start With No Symptoms

Precancerous polyps and early-stage colorectal cancer don't always cause symptoms, especially at first. This means that someone could have polyps or colorectal cancer and not know it. That is why having a screening test is so important.

What Are the Symptoms?

Some people with colorectal polyps or colorectal cancer do have symptoms. They may include:

- Blood in or on your stool
- Stomach pain, aches, or cramps that don't go away
- Unusual weight loss

If you have any of these symptoms, talk to your doctor. These symptoms may not be cancer-related, but seeing your doctor is the best way to know.



Tests That Find Polyps and Cancer



- Flexible sigmoidoscopy every 5 years*,
- Colonoscopy every 10 years,
- Double-contrast barium enema every 5 years*,
- CT colonography (virtual colonoscopy) every 5 years*
- Yearly guaiac-based fecal occult blood test (gFOBT)**
- Yearly fecal immunochemical test (FIT)**
- Stool DNA test (sDNA), every 3 years*

**If the test is positive, a colonoscopy should be done.*

**Highly sensitive versions of these tests should be used with the take-home multiple sample method. A gFOBT or FIT done during a digital rectum exam in the doctor's office is not adequate for screening.*

Lifestyle Factors

You can reduce your risk of getting cancer by making healthy choices. Lifestyle factors that may reduce your risk of colorectal cancer include:

- Regular physical activity
- Eating lots of fresh fruits and vegetables
- Diet rich in fiber and low in fat
- Maintaining a healthy weight
- Limited alcohol intake
- Avoiding tobacco usage



Great Plains Colorectal Cancer Screening Initiative