

## My Action Plan

- I will talk to my doctor about colorectal health.
- I will learn about my screening choices and get screened.
- I will check my family history for colorectal cancer.
- I will review my lifestyle and make changes for better health.



# Colorectal Cancer

## Are there any factors that protect me from Colorectal Cancer?

We don't know that much about what protects you from colorectal cancer. Those who have a lower risk of colorectal cancer do the following:

- Exercise on a regular basis.
- Maintain a healthy weight throughout life.
- Limit alcohol intake.
- Do not smoke.
- Have polyps removed during a colonoscopy.
- Limit the amount of red meat (beef, pork, lamb, or liver) and processed meats (hot dogs and some deli meats) they eat.

## Where can I get more information?

**Schedule your colonoscopy today**  
1-888-369-2427 (888-FOX-CHASE)  
or visit [www.foxchase.org](http://www.foxchase.org)

**Philip E. and Naomi P. Lippincott  
Resource and Education Center**  
215-214-1618  
[recstaff@fcc.edu](mailto:recstaff@fcc.edu)



OFFICE OF COMMUNITY  
OUTREACH AND  
ENGAGEMENT



Temple Health refers to the health, education and research activities carried out by the affiliates of Temple University Health System (TUHS) and by the Lewis Katz School of Medicine at Temple University. TUHS neither provides nor controls the provision of health care. All health care is provided by its member organizations or independent health care providers affiliated with TUHS member organizations. Each TUHS member organization is owned and operated pursuant to its governing documents.

Non-discrimination notice: It is the policy of Fox Chase Cancer Center, that there shall be no exclusion from, or participation in, and no one denied the benefits of, the delivery of quality medical care on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity/expression, disability, age, ancestry, color, national origin, physical ability, level of education, or source of payment.

© Fox Chase Cancer Center. All rights reserved 6/2024

**Know the Facts...**



## Am I at risk for Colorectal Cancer?

There is no way to know for sure if you are going to get colorectal cancer. Both men and women get colorectal cancer. Certain things raise your chances of getting it. These are called risk factors.

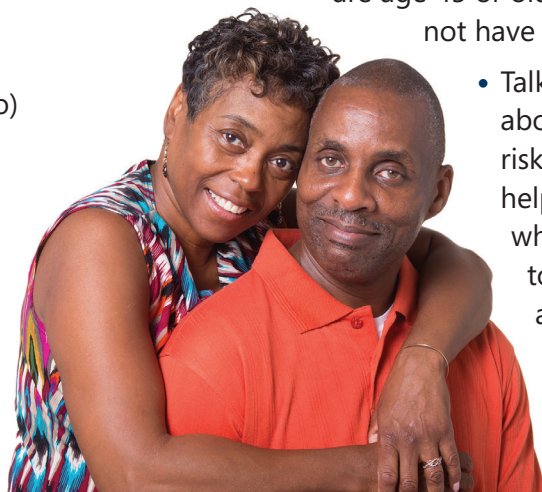
### Risk factors you cannot change:

- I am 45 or older
- I am African American
- I have a personal history of colorectal cancer, ovarian cancer, or polyps (tissue growing in the lining of the colon or rectum)
- I have a family history of colorectal cancer
- I have chronic inflammatory bowel disease (ulcerative colitis or Crohn's disease)
- I have an inherited syndrome like familial adenomatous polyposis (FAP) or hereditary nonpolyposis colon cancer (HNPCC or Lynch syndrome)
- I have Type 2 diabetes

### Risk factors you can change:

- I drink a lot of alcohol
- I smoke cigarettes, cigars, (tobacco)
- I am overweight or obese
- My diet is high in red meats (beef, pork, lamb, or liver) and/or processed meats (hot dogs and some deli meats)

If you have *checked any* of these risk factors, you may be at risk for colorectal cancer.



## What are the symptoms of Colorectal Cancer?

Colorectal cancer often has mild or no symptoms in the early stages. But as the cancer grows, symptoms may include:

- Rectal bleeding
- Blood in the stool
- Stools that are narrower than usual
- Change in bowel habits
- Stomach cramps or pain in the lower abdomen
- Diarrhea, constipation, or feeling that the bowel does not empty completely
- Weight loss with no known reason
- Feeling tired all the time
- Nausea and vomiting

## Screening guidelines

It is important for men and women to follow recommended colorectal screening guidelines:

- Get tested for colorectal cancer if you are age 45 or older, even if you do not have any symptoms.
- Talk to your doctor about your personal risk factors. This will help you decide whether you need to be screened at an earlier age.

## What are the tests for Colorectal Cancer?

### • Colonoscopy

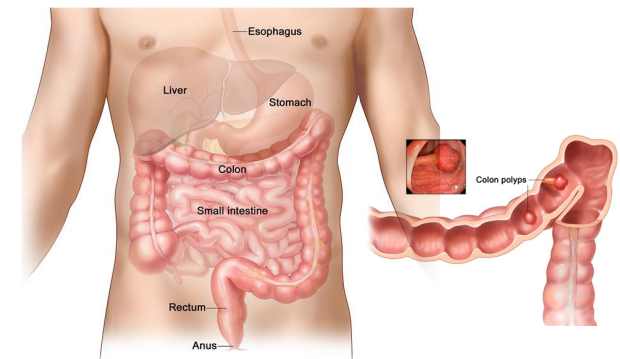
Your doctor uses a flexible lighted tube (colonoscope) to check the inside walls of the rectum and the whole colon. If a polyp is found during the test, it will be removed. This test is done under anesthesia. This test is the recommended screening test for colorectal cancer and should be done at least every ten years.

### • Fecal Immunochemical Test (FIT)

The FIT checks for hidden blood in the stool. It is recommended that you have this test each year. This test is done at home.

### • Flexible Sigmoidoscopy

Your doctor uses a flexible lighted tube (sigmoidoscope) to check the inside walls of the rectum and part of the colon. If a polyp is found during the test, it will be removed. This test is recommended every five years.



Polyps in the colon: Tissue growing in the lining of the colon and rectum.