

MAKE THAT CALL

For Colon Cancer Screening



PREVENT, TREAT AND SURVIVE

Colorectal cancer, often referred to as colon cancer, is the second leading cause of cancer death in the United States — but it doesn't have to be. This disease is largely **preventable** & highly **curable** with the recommended screening & early detection.

RISK FACTORS

- Colon cancer occurs in both **men and women**.
- Colon cancer may occur at any age, but the risk is increased in persons **age 45** & older.
- Medical factors that **increase the risk** of colon cancer include:
 - Personal or family history of colorectal polyps or colorectal cancer
 - Personal history of inflammatory bowel disease
 - Personal or family history of hereditary colon cancer syndromes

SCREENING = PREVENTION & EARLY DETECTION

- Screening refers to testing that is done before symptoms are present.
- Screening tests allow the detection of early colon cancer when it is highly curable, as well as the detection of growths, called **polyps**, which can turn into cancer. By removing a pre-cancerous polyp, colon cancer can often be prevented.
- Women and men at **average risk** for colon cancer should begin screening at **age 45**. You should speak with your doctor to determine which age is right for you.
- Those who have certain risk factors (such as a family history of colorectal polyps or cancer), need to speak with their doctor about beginning screening at a younger age.

Tests That Detect Both Polyps and Cancer

- Colonoscopy every 10 years
- Flexible sigmoidoscopy every 5 years
- CT colonography (virtual colonoscopy) every 5 years

Tests That Detect Primarily Cancer

- Fecal immunochemical test (FIT), every year
- Fecal occult blood test (FOBT), every year
- Stool DNA test every three years

The New York City Department of Health & Mental Hygiene recommends colonoscopy as the preferred method of screening for colorectal cancer.

You should talk to your doctor about which test is right for you.

SYMPTOMS

- Early colon cancer often has no symptoms at all.
- When present, symptoms may include:
 - rectal bleeding
 - change in bowel habits
 - narrowing of the stool
 - cramping pain in the abdomen
 - fatigue
 - unexplained weight loss
- If you have symptoms, please see your doctor promptly for evaluation.

THIS CALL CAN SAVE YOUR LIFE

#MakeThatCall

NewYork-Presbyterian/Columbia:
(646)-960-8743

NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medicine:
(646)-893-2136

[nyp.org/colonoscopy](https://www.nyp.org/colonoscopy)

PREVENT COLON CANCER AT ANY AGE

You can reduce your colon cancer risk at any age. **See what YOU can do!**

Starting in your 20's

- **Learn your family's medical history.** Identify any history of colon cancer. Conditions such as Lynch Syndrome and inflammatory bowel disease can also increase one's risk.
- **Are you a smoker? Quit ASAP!**
- **Don't overdo it on alcohol.** Excessive alcohol intake is associated with increased risk for colon cancer.
- **Cut the fat.** Studies suggest diets high in red meat and fat may increase your risk.
- **Increase veggies and fiber.** Diets higher in fiber, folate, and calcium have been found to promote colon health.
- **Get moving!** Studies have shown that daily physical activity can decrease colon cancer risk by 50%.

Starting in your 30's

- **Learn the symptoms** of colon cancer. Know them, and alert your doctor if you see them. There has been a recent rise in colon cancer among younger people.
- **Ask your doctor if early screening is right for you** if you have a family history of colon cancer or related conditions that may increase your risk, such as Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis.
- **Eat healthy & exercise.** Eating well and staying active when you're young reduces your chances of many conditions, including cancer. Reduce intake of red and processed meats. Increase your intake of fiber, fruit and vegetables.

Starting in your 40's

- **Check in on the latest screening guidelines** for colon cancer. The medical community may change them based on new research.
- **Refresh yourself on the symptoms** of colon cancer. Report any to your doctor.
- **Keep up on your early screening schedule** if your doctor recommends it.
- **Maintain a healthy weight.** As your body ages, exercise & good diet is still important.

Starting at 45

- **GET SCREENED! Whether or not you have a family history, now is the time to speak to your doctor about colon cancer screening,** and which diagnostic method is right for you. 1 in 3 adults between 45 and 75 years old currently are not being tested as recommended.

Time for colon cancer screening? #MakeThatCall:

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