

The Right Colorectal Cancer Test For You

This **shared decision making guide** is for adults who are 45 years of age and older, at average risk for colorectal cancer and do not have any personal or family history of colon cancer or polyps.

At UChicago Medicine we care about you and what you feel is right for you. This guide can help you work with your healthcare team to decide on the best screening test for you.

2 Kinds of Tests for Colon Cancer

- **A Stool Test** is done at home by taking a stool sample and mailing it to a lab.
- **A Visual Test** is a test a doctor does to look inside your colon.

Both tests can find colorectal cancer.

Most insurance plans, including Medicare, cover these tests.

Talk with your health care team about what test may be right for you.

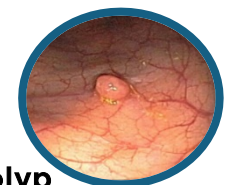
Stool Tests: Fecal Immunochemical Test (FIT)

- Take one time a year
- Can find cancer
- You take a stool sample at home using a kit from your doctor.
- Checks for blood in your stool from one bowel movement.
- You mail your sample to a lab.
- If the FIT test is not normal you will need to have a colonoscopy.



Visual Tests: Colonoscopy


- Done every 10 years
- Can prevent and find cancer
- Your doctor uses a tube with a small camera to look for and remove polyps and cancer in your colon and rectum.
- Before the test you need to do a bowel prep to empty your colon.
- For the bowel prep, you will take a laxative medication. It causes watery stools.
- You will be asleep during the procedure.
- You need to take the day off from work and have someone drive you home.



Colon Polyp

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Bring this page to your next clinic appointment. Think about what is important to you in choosing a screening test. Check the box below with your answer to each question to help you and your healthcare team talk about what test is right for you.

 How Concerned Are You About:	Not at All	A Little	Some-what	Very
Having to collect samples of your stool				
Having a test done every year				
Taking bowel prep laxatives to empty my colon				
Having an invasive procedure				
Taking time off to have a colonoscopy				
Being asleep during the procedure				
Needing someone to drive you home after the test				
Taking a test that finds polyps and prevents cancer				

Colorectal Cancer Test: Myths and Facts

Myth	Fact
The tests cost too much money	Most screening tests are covered by insurance, including Medicare. There are also low-cost screening options.
No one in my family has ever had colorectal cancer, so I am not at risk.	Most colorectal cancers are found in people without a family history of colorectal cancer. Those with a family history are at higher risk.
If my stool looks normal, I am fine.	You can have colorectal cancer or polyps even if your stool looks normal or you are not having any other symptoms.
Colorectal cancer is not that common.	Colorectal cancer is the second-leading cause of cancer-related deaths in the U.S. Testing is the best way to prevent death from colorectal cancer.
Having a colonoscopy is the only way to get tested.	There are different kinds of tests. Some are simple and can be done at home.

Ways to Lower Your Risk of Getting Colorectal Cancer

- Keep a healthy weight
- Keep physically active
- Do not smoke
- Limit alcohol
- Eat a diet high in fruits and vegetables

