



## Colorectal Cancer (also known as colon cancer)

### Understanding colorectal cancer

Colorectal cancer is a type of cancer that starts in either the colon or the rectum. It's the second leading cause of death from cancer in the United States. More than 9 out of 10 people with colorectal cancer are older than age 50. African-Americans are at a higher risk.

### Things you can do to help prevent the disease.

Age and racial or ethnic background are risks you can't control. But, you can do these things to reduce your risk:



**Don't Smoke.** If you smoke, get help quitting. It is never too late to quit. Tobacco smoking, especially long-term smoking, increases the risk. If you smoke, talk with your provider about getting help to quit. You can also get help by calling the National Quit Connection line at **1-800-QUIT NOW** (1-800-784-8669). Learn more by visiting: [smokingstopshere.com](http://smokingstopshere.com).



**Eat right.** Eating lots of red and processed meats has been linked to a higher cancer risk. Avoid foods like bacon, hot dogs, chicken nuggets, sausage, ham, and canned meats. Choose lean meats and fish instead. Eating plenty of fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fiber may help lower your risk.



**Get exercise.** Healthy adults should aim for at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity, five or more days a week. Contact your county or city's recreation department to ask about no-cost exercise classes and how to get access to the community gym. Some faith organizations also have no-cost fitness programs.



**Maintain a healthy weight.** Being overweight or obese makes colorectal cancer more likely. If you need help losing weight, ask your provider to suggest a weight-loss plan. Writing down what you eat in a diary can help you become aware of and avoid unhealthy foods in your diet.

## Importance of screening.

One of the best ways to prevent colorectal cancer is to get screened for the disease. Routine screening is helpful in two ways:

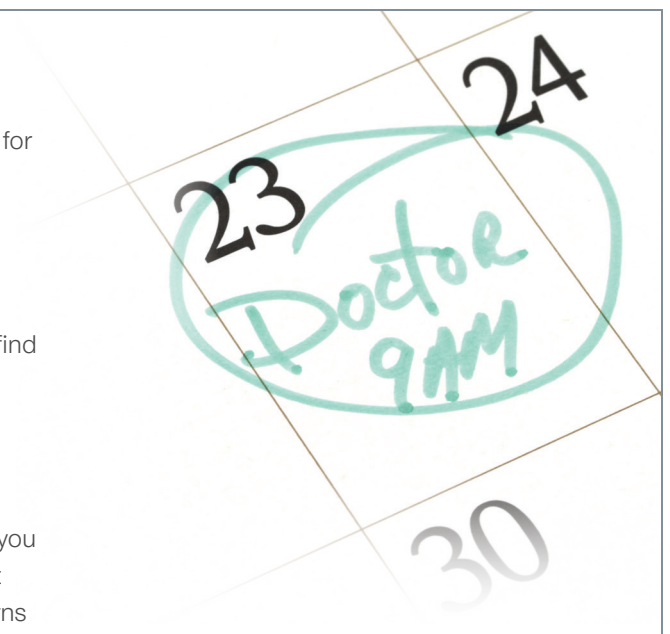
- It can find cancer early when it's easier to treat.
- It can spot non-cancerous growths called polyps so they can be removed before they become cancer.

For most people, screening begins at age 50. Talk to your doctor to find out if you are at a higher risk and if you should be screened sooner. African Americans, for example, may need to start at age 45.

## Work with your doctor.

Your health care provider can help you decide which test is right for you and how often to have it done. Routine screening can play a big part in lowering your colon cancer risk. Write a list of questions or concerns and bring to the appointment. Remember, you can also have a friend or family member accompany you and take notes.

Source: [cancer.gov](http://cancer.gov)



## We are here to help.

UnitedHealthcare Community Plan members can get help finding a new doctor, scheduling an appointment, understanding their benefits, or filling their prescriptions by calling Member Services. We are here for you!



Please call us at **1-800-318-8821, TTY 711**,  
8 a.m. – 7 p.m. ET, Monday – Friday.



Visit **UHCCommunityPlan.com**  
or **myuhc.com/CommunityPlan**.



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