



Colorectal Cancer

Getting Checked for Colon Cancer:
Which Test Should I Get?
Reviewed February 2018



Why should I be tested for colon cancer?

Screening could save your life!

Colon cancer is the second most common cause of **cancer death** in men and women combined in Kentucky.

It's the Right Choice!

The good news is that screening tests can find this cancer early, when treatment works best. It is important to **get checked regularly**.

Who should be tested for colon cancer?



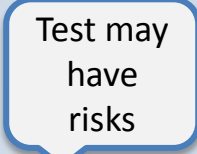
In order to know **who** needs a colon cancer screening, it's important to know some **common risk factors** for developing this cancer:

People at Average Risk	People at Increased Risk
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ages 50-75 • After 75, discuss with your doctor if screening needs to be continued 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a personal history of colon cancer or polyps • Have a family history of colon cancer or polyps • Some medical organizations recommend African Americans begin screening at age 45 • Have a history of inflammatory bowel disease (Crohn's or colitis) <p>People who are at an increased risk, must get screened more frequently.</p>

Which test should I have?

There's more than One Test— You have a Choice!

There is more than one test recommended for colon cancer screening- it's important to talk to your doctor about your risk factors to find the right test for you. Some tests include fecal or stool blood testing (FIT or gFOBT) or looking at the colon and rectum (colonoscopy or sigmoidoscopy). You can read about some of these tests on the back page.

How often do I get screened?	Test Name	What happens?
Once a Year 	FIT (Fecal Immuno-chemical Test)*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Looks for blood in the stool No known preparation or dietary restrictions No risk involved Inexpensive and usually covered by insurance
Once a Year 	gFOBT (Guaiac Fecal Occult Blood Test)*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Looks for blood in the stool Doctor may ask you to avoid certain foods and medicines No risk involved Inexpensive and usually covered by insurance
Every 10 Years 	Colonoscopy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Doctor finds and removes any pre-cancerous growths (called polyps) in the colon using a lighted tube (called a colonoscope) Preparation is needed- bowel must be completely emptied There is a small risk from the procedure or medication Expensive and usually covered by insurance with copays or deductibles. Some insurance companies will charge more if your doctor finds and removes a growth or polyp.

***People at high risk must get screened more regularly and may have to be screened with a colonoscopy.**

Screening Resources

- For more information, see the following documents on the Kentucky Cancer Program's website at <http://www.kycancerprogram.org/>:
 - Colonoscopy Fee Information
 - Colonoscopy Fee Worksheet
 - Pathfinder provides information on local resources throughout Kentucky. Visit the Pathfinder portal at <http://www.kycancerprogram.org/>: