



Colon Cancer

Protect yourself: know the facts

What is colon cancer?

The colon and rectum are parts of the digestive system. Colon cancer begins when cells that are not normal grow inside the colon or rectum.

The cancer often begins as a small growth called a polyp. Polyps are not cancer, but they can turn in to cancer over time. Polyps can be removed to prevent cancer.

What are the symptoms?

There usually are no symptoms of colon cancer at first.

When the disease is more advanced, symptoms may include:



Blood in the stool



Weight loss



A change in bowel habits



Feeling tired



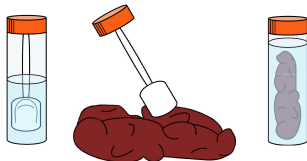
Cramps



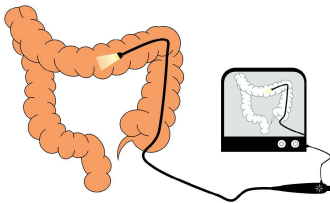
Nausea

SCREENING SAVES LIVES

Screening is important because early-stage colon cancer may not have symptoms. **Screening means looking for signs of disease before symptoms appear.** Two types of tests that check for signs of colon cancer:



Stool Tests look for signs of colon cancer in the stool (poop) and can be done at home with a kit that is used to collect a sample. The sample is sent to a lab to be tested. Examples of these tests include Fecal Occult Blood Tests (FOBT/FIT) and Stool DNA tests.



Visual Tests are done by a doctor who looks for signs of cancer inside the colon and rectum with a thin, lighted tube. Examples include Colonoscopy, Flexible Sigmoidoscopy, and CT Colonography

Who should be screened?

People who are of average risk should begin colon cancer screening at age 45.

You may be at higher risk if and should talk with your doctor about screening earlier if:

- You or a close relative has had colon polyps or colon cancer
- You have an inflammatory bowel disease or certain inherited conditions



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Tips to lower your cancer risk:



Get screened regularly



Eat foods high in fiber



Exercise daily



Limit alcohol



Maintain a healthy weight



Quit smoking

What if I can't afford the tests?

- Most cancer screenings are covered by insurance, Medicare, and Medicaid.
- You should check with your insurance company to ask about screening requirements, and to find out if you are eligible.

The Kentucky Colon Cancer Screening Program offers free colon cancer screening services for those meeting eligibility requirements.



Scan the QR code or call
877-597-4655

For additional information:



Visit **www.kycancerprogram.org** and click on the Pathfinder link to find cancer support services and programs near you.

Visit **www.kycancerprogram.org** to connect with your local Regional Cancer Control Specialist.

National Cancer Institute

1-800-4-CANCER, www.cancer.gov

American Cancer Society

1-800-ACS-2345, www.cancer.org

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

www.cdc.gov

www.kycancerprogram.org

The Kentucky Cancer Program is jointly administered by the University of Kentucky Markey Cancer Center and the University of Louisville Brown Cancer Center.

