

COLON CANCER SCREENING & RISK FACTORS

Screening Could Save Your Life

In 2015 it is estimated that about 136,830 people are predicted to be diagnosed with colorectal cancer in the US, and about 50,310 people are predicted to die of the disease. Colon cancer ranks as third most deadly cancer in the US. However, colon cancer is considered to be one of the most preventable and treatable cancers if caught early. In fact, the combination of regular screenings and lifestyle changes can decrease your risk.

Screening

Screening for colon cancer should be a part of routine care for all adults aged 50 years and older, especially for those with first-degree relatives with colorectal cancer. However, contact your medical provider if you notice any of the following:

- A change in bowel habits, such as diarrhea, constipation, or narrowing of the stool, that lasts for more than a few days
- A feeling that you need to have a bowel movement that is not relieved by doing so
- Rectal bleeding
- Blood in the stool which may make it look dark
- Cramping or abdominal pain
- Weakness and fatigue
- Unintended weight loss

Decrease Your Risk

Lifestyle factors may contribute to an increased risk of colorectal cancer. Making the following changes could help decrease your risk:

- Increase physical activity
- Increase fruit and vegetable intake
- Add high fiber foods to your diet
- Lose weight
- Limit your alcohol consumption
- Stop smoking

For additional resources on how to decrease your risk of colon cancer and screening resources please visit: www.cancer.org

Did You Know?

Approximately 5% or 1 in 20, Americans will be diagnosed with cancer of the colon or rectum in their lifetime.

References

<http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/pdq/treatment/colon/HealthProfessional/page1>

http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/colorectal/basic_info/risk_factors.htm