

## Colorectal Cancer Awareness

According to the American Cancer Society, colon cancer is the third most common cause of cancer deaths with more than 52,000 Americans expected to die of it this year with 106,970 new cases of colon cancer, and 46,050 new cases of rectal cancer. The National Cancer Institute reported that the rate of colorectal cancer has been rapidly rising among adults under the age of 50 and according to Fight Colorectal Cancer—a patient advocacy group, colorectal cancer is expected to become the No. 1 cancer killer for people 20 to 49 years of age.



## Risk Factors for Colon Cancer

- People who suffer with inflammatory bowel disease such as Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis.
- A personal history or family history of colorectal cancer or colorectal polyps.
- A genetic syndrome such as familial adenomatous polyposis (FAP) or heredity non-polyposis colorectal cancer (Lynch syndrome).

## Contributing life factors include:

- Lack of regular exercise.
- A diet low in fruits and vegetables.
- A low-fiber and high-fat diet.
- A diet high in processed meats.

- Being overweight and obese.
- Alcohol consumption.
- Tobacco use.

### **Signs and Symptoms of Colon Cancer**

While many people with colon cancer may not experience any symptoms in the early stages, the signs and symptoms can vary depending on the cancer's size and location in the large intestine.

Symptoms include:

- A persistent change in your bowel habits, including diarrhea or constipation or a change in the consistency of your stool.
- Rectal bleeding or blood in your stool.
- Persistent abdominal discomfort, such as cramps, gas, or pain.
- A feeling that your bowel doesn't completely empty.
- Weakness or fatigue.
- Unexplained weight loss.

### **Screening Recommendations**

Screening for colorectal cancer saves lives and if you're 45 or older, it is time to see your doctor and get screened for colorectal cancer. There are several screening options available and it is important to talk to your doctor about which screening option is best for you.

Screening is so important because precancerous polyps can be removed before they turn into cancer and if cancer is found early, the treatment can be very effective.

<https://www.today.com/health/health/colorectal-cancer-survivor-home-test-rcna25564>

<https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/colorectal>

<https://www.cancer.org/cancer/colon-rectal-cancer/about/key-statistics.html>



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