

# Colorectal Cancer Screening



**A screening test is used to look for a disease when a person doesn't have symptoms.**

Colorectal cancer almost always develops from precancerous polyps (abnormal growths) in the colon or rectum. Screening tests can find precancerous polyps, so that they can be removed before they turn into cancer.

**Screening tests can also find colorectal cancer early, when treatment works best.**

Evidence clearly shows that regular screening, beginning at age 50, is the key to preventing colorectal cancer. There are different tests and procedures available. Speak to your provider about which are right for you, and when you should have them.

## Questions?

Talk to your provider about options for colorectal cancer screening, and visit [mvphealthcare.com](http://mvphealthcare.com) and select *Members*, then *Health & Wellness* to find online resources to help you set, track, and reach your overall health improvement goals.



## Colorectal Cancer Screening Tests and Procedures at-a-Glance

Food or Other Restrictions	Bowel Preparation	Sedation	Points of Emphasis	Test Frequency
<p><b>Three Stool Cards</b> An at-home collection test completed on three different days.</p> <p>For three days prior to beginning the test, the following foods must be avoided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>red meat</li> <li>broccoli, turnips, cauliflower, mushrooms, and horseradish</li> <li>apples, oranges, vitamin C supplements, and juices containing vitamin C</li> </ul> <p>You should also avoid dental procedures for three days prior to beginning the test.</p>	No bowel preparation is required.	No sedation is required.	<p>Foods listed here, in addition to a few recommended medications, need to be avoided for the three days prior to beginning the test and during the testing period to ensure accurate results.</p> <p>Bleeding gums, hemorrhoids, or nosebleeds for three days prior and during the testing period will also cause inaccurate results.</p>	Once yearly
No food or dietary restrictions.	No bowel preparation is required.	No sedation is required.	A positive finding on any of the stool screenings will require a follow-up test involving direct imaging of the colon and rectum.	Once yearly

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<b>Stool DNA Kit (Cologuard® brand)</b> An at-home collection test usually completed with a single sample.				
No food or dietary restrictions.	No bowel preparation is required.	No sedation is required.	A positive finding on any of the stool screenings will require a follow-up test involving direct imaging of the colon and rectum.	Every three years
<b>Colonoscopy</b> A procedure where a lighted scope is passed from the rectum to the beginning portion of the colon, approximately 59 inches.				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clear liquid diet the day before the test and fasting after midnight.</li> <li>Medications may usually be taken, but you should discuss restrictions with your doctor, especially if you are taking medications for diabetes.</li> <li>If you are taking a daily aspirin, ask your doctor if you should stop for the procedure.</li> </ul>	Bowel preparation will be prescribed by your doctor, and will involve bowel cleansing or oral laxatives beginning the afternoon before the procedure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IV sedation during the procedure.</li> <li>You will need to have someone drive you home.</li> <li>Plan to rest the remainder of the day following the procedure.</li> </ul>	The preparation must be completed exactly as ordered by your doctor. Your bowel must be completely emptied before the procedure. Polyps can be removed if seen during the procedure and sent to a lab for biopsy.	Every 10 years, if no abnormalities are found
<b>Flexible Sigmoidoscopy</b> A procedure where a lighted scope is passed from the rectum to the sigmoid colon, approximately 8–10 inches.				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clear liquid diet the day before the test and fasting after midnight.</li> <li>Medications may usually be taken, but you should discuss restrictions with your doctor, especially if you are taking medications for diabetes.</li> <li>If you are taking a daily aspirin, ask your doctor if you should stop for the procedure.</li> </ul>	Bowel preparation will be prescribed by your doctor, and will involve bowel cleansing with oral laxatives beginning the afternoon before the procedure.	Usually, no sedation is required.	The preparation must be completed exactly as ordered by your doctor. Your bowel must be completely emptied before the procedure. Polyps can be removed if seen during the procedure and sent to a lab for biopsy. The examination examines only the end portion of the colon, not the entire length.	Every five years, if no abnormalities are found
<b>Virtual Colonoscopy (CT Colonography)</b> A medical imaging procedure using x-rays to produce images of the colon.				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clear liquid diet the day before the test and fasting after midnight.</li> <li>Medications may usually be taken, but you should discuss restrictions with your doctor, especially if you are taking medications for diabetes.</li> <li>If you are taking a daily aspirin, ask your doctor if you should stop for the procedure.</li> </ul>	Bowel preparation will be prescribed by your doctor, and will involve bowel cleansing with oral laxatives beginning the afternoon before the procedure.	No sedation is required.	This procedure is only available for select patients and requires prior authorization from insurance plan. If a polyp is found, a regular colonoscopy is needed to remove the polyp and confirm the diagnosis; usually done immediately following the virtual colonoscopy procedure.	Every five years, if no abnormalities are found