



Get Screened:
**Find Colon Cancer as
Early as Possible**





Regular screening and timely follow-up can prevent colon cancer or detect it early.

Colon (or colorectal) cancer occurs in the large intestine (colon) or rectum and is



a leading cause of cancer death for New Yorkers.

Fortunately, routine screenings can help prevent it or find it early, when treatment often works best. Many people should start screening at age 45. People at higher risk may need to begin earlier.

There are several methods of colon cancer screening. Colonoscopies allow health care providers to detect and remove polyps (growths) from the colon or rectum to help prevent cancer. Other methods (for example, stool-based tests) require a follow-up colonoscopy for people who screen positive.



Talk to your health care provider about your screening options.

Be sure to ask:

- **When should I begin screening for colon cancer?**
- **Am I at risk if someone in my family had colon cancer or polyps? Should I get screened for colon cancer earlier than others?**
- **Is colonoscopy the only screening option?**
- **How do I know which screening option is right for me?**
- **Do you have educational materials, such as brochures or pamphlets, in my language?**
- **Is colon cancer screening covered by my insurance?**



Remember to follow up!

After you get screened, ask your provider when you should get your next colon cancer screening.



Talk to your health care provider about your risk factors.

You may need to start
screening early if you have:



- A family history of colon cancer or precancerous polyps
- Certain inherited conditions, such as familial adenomatous polyposis (FAP) or hereditary nonpolyposis colorectal cancer (HNPCC), also called Lynch syndrome
- Ulcerative colitis or Crohn's disease

You may also be at increased risk if you have:

- Obesity
 - A history of smoking
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Other ways to reduce your risk:

- Maintain a healthy weight and be physically active.
- Eat fewer processed meats (such as bacon, hot dogs or lunch meats).
- If you smoke, make a plan to quit. For help quitting, call **311** or visit nyc.gov/nycquits.
- Drinking alcohol may increase your colon cancer risk. Reduce the amount you drink and how often. Visit nyc.gov/health and search for **alcohol and health** for more information and resources.





Steps to Colon Cancer Screening

Step One



Get Covered

If you do not have insurance, you may be eligible to sign up for no- or low-cost coverage. Call 347-665-0214 or text **COVEREDNYC** to 55676 for free enrollment assistance. To learn more about no- or low-cost screening, visit nyc.gov/health/coloncancer and see "Payment" under the "Screening" section.

If you cannot get insurance, or if your insurance does not cover screening, you have options. Call **311** or 844-NYC-4NYC (844-692-4692) to be connected to an **NYC Health + Hospitals** location. You can also contact the **New York State Cancer Services Program**, which provides colon cancer screening to uninsured New Yorkers ages 45 to 75.

Step Two



Talk to Your Provider

Ask your health care provider about:

- Your individual risk for colon cancer
- Your screening options, including the process, benefits and risks of each option

Step Three



Get Screened and Follow Up

Regular screening and timely follow-up can prevent colon cancer or detect it early. Be sure to ask your provider when you should get screened again.

* Most insurance plans, including Medicaid and Medicare, cover colon cancer screenings. However, coverage can vary. Check with your health care provider and insurer about coverage before your screening test.

For more information,
visit **nyc.gov/health/coloncancer**.