



# HealthyPeople

## CRC AWARENESS MONTH

### WHAT IS CRC?

Colorectal cancer, or CRC, occurs when abnormal cells form tumors in normal tissues of the intestines and digestive system. The exact type of “colon” or “rectal” cancer depends on where the abnormal cells first begin and how fast they grow and spread. The main difference between these two cancers is where the tumor first forms — in the rectum or in the rest of the colon. CRC may not show any symptoms at first, but as the tumor grows, it can disrupt your body’s ability to digest food and remove waste. This causes potentially severe bowel and abdominal problems.

## FACTS AND PREVENTION

### POLYPS AND HOW THEY GROW

A colon polyp is a small growth found on the inside of the colon. Most polyps grow on the end of a stalk, somewhat like a mushroom. Although, some polyps, known as sessile polyps, can lie flat against the wall of the colon. When it comes to polyps, you’re better safe than sorry. When a polyp gets larger than the eraser on the end of a pencil (five millimeters) its cells can gradually become cancerous. Not all polyps will become cancer, but it is important to remove them all to block the possibility.

### COLON AND RECTAL CANCERS CAN BE PREVENTED

Did you know colon and rectal cancer can be prevented? Get screened. By finding and removing precancerous polyps (adenomas) that can develop into cancer, colorectal cancer can be stopped before it ever starts. Plus, screening for colon cancer can detect colorectal cancer early and when it’s most curable. **Get Screened.** All adults over the age of 50 are at risk for colorectal cancer and should be screened for adenomatous polyps and cancer. There are plenty of

screening options available, including at-home tests. Some people have a greater-than-average risk and should work with their doctor to decide on a screening plan that works for them. Screening can also find dangerous lesions that are not polyps.

### ANYONE CAN GET COLORECTAL CANCER

While over 90 percent of colon and rectal cancers are found in people over the age of 50, anyone at any age can get colorectal cancer. People younger than 50 need to protect themselves by knowing their family cancer history, as well as their own medical history. People with a family history of certain cancer or with certain medical conditions may need to begin colonoscopy screening earlier and be tested more often. In addition, everyone, no matter how old you are, needs to know the signs & symptoms of colorectal cancer and have a complete colonoscopy to rule out cancer if you have these symptoms.

Source: [fightcolorectalcaner.org](http://fightcolorectalcaner.org)