



# Colorectal Cancer: *Preventable, Beatable, Treatable*

American Cancer Society





# What we'll be talking about

- How common is colorectal cancer?
- What is colorectal cancer?
- What causes it?
- What are the risk factors?
- Can colorectal cancer be prevented?
- Tests to find colorectal cancer early
- What you can do
- More information



# Colorectal cancer: How common is it?

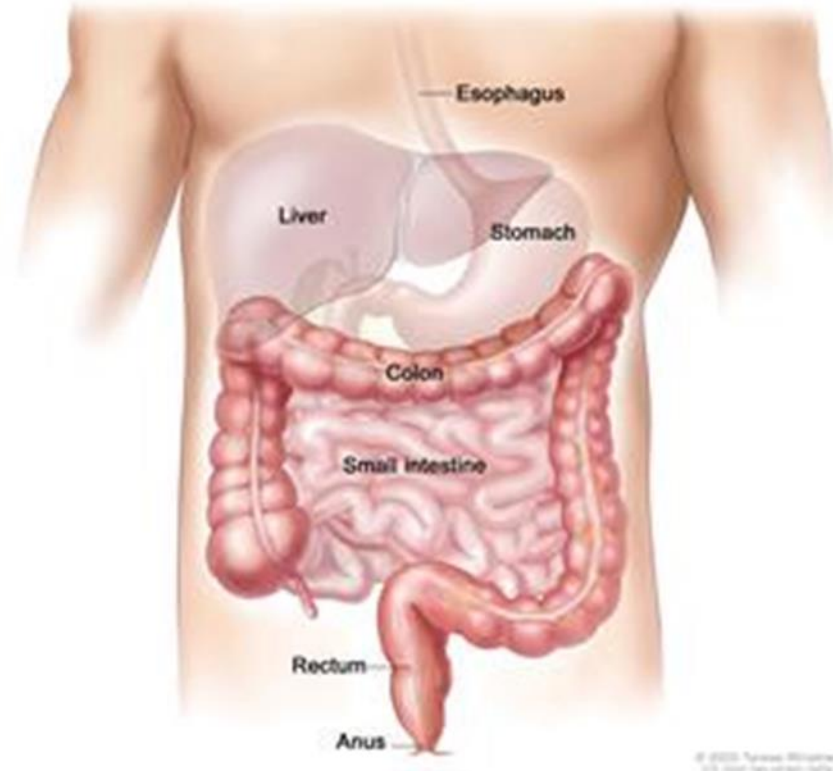
- The 3rd most common cancer in both men and women in the U.S.
- The 3rd leading cause of cancer-related death in the U.S.
- It's estimated that more than half of all cases could be prevented by regular colonoscopy screening!

# What is colorectal cancer?

The **colon** (large bowel or large intestine)

- A muscular tube about 5 feet long
- Part of the digestive system
- Absorbs water and salt from food
- Stores waste matter

The **rectum** is the last 6 inches of the digestive system.





# What is colorectal cancer?

- Cancer is the growth of abnormal cells.
- The cells can invade and damage normal tissue.
- Colorectal cancer starts in the colon or the rectum (parts of the digestive system).
- ColoRectal Cancer is often abbreviated as CRC.



# Causes of colorectal cancer

- We do not know the cause of most colorectal cancers.
- Most likely cause is related to changes in the genetic material (DNA) in our cells.
- Most DNA changes are related to our lifestyle.



# Colorectal cancer risk factors

Risk factors are anything that can increase or decrease a person's chance of getting a disease, such as cancer.

- Age

Most CRC occurs in people age 50 and older

- Diet

High in red meats (like beef, pork, or lamb) and processed meats (like hot dogs, bacon, or cold cuts) → **raises** risk for CRC

High in fruits and vegetables → **lowers** risk

# Colorectal cancer risk factors

- Physical activity
  - Less active → **raises** risk
- Overweight
  - Obesity → **raises** risk of having and of dying from CRC
- Smoking → **raises** risk
- Heavy alcohol use → **raises** risk
- Type 2 diabetes → **raises** risk







# Colorectal cancer major risk factors

- Some adults have risk factors that make them more likely to develop CRC than others, such as those with:
  - Inflammatory bowel disease, such as ulcerative colitis or Crohn's disease
  - A history of adenomatous polyps
  - A family history of adenomatous polyps, CRC, or certain inherited syndromes
  - Those who have had CRC

*Talk to your doctor right away if you have any of these major risk factors.*

# Polyps

Colorectal cancer can develop from a polyp.



Normal colon

to

Adenoma

to

Carcinoma



# Preventing colorectal cancer

- Some colorectal cancers can be prevented with regular screening.
- Screening is testing to a disease in people who have no symptoms.
- Why screen?
  - To find and remove polyps before they become cancer
  - To find CRC early – when it's small and has not spread, and when treatment can be more effective




# How is CRC screening done?

Types of tests used for CRC screening:

Tests that can find both  
polyps and colorectal cancer

Tests that mainly find cancer



# Tests that can find both polyps and cancer

- ✓ Flexible sigmoidoscopy
  - ✓ Colonoscopy
  - ✓ Double contrast barium enema (DCBE)
  - ✓ CT colonography (“virtual colonoscopy”)
- These tests look inside the colon to find abnormal areas.
  - They are done with a lighted tube put into the rectum or with special x-ray tests.
  - If polyps are found they can be removed before they turn into cancer, so these tests can prevent cancer.
  - These tests are preferred if they are available and if a person is willing to have them.



# Tests that mainly find cancer

- ✓ Guaiac-based fecal occult blood test (gFOBT)
  - ✓ Fecal immunochemical test (FIT)
  - ✓ Stool DNA tests (sDNA)
- All of these test the stool for hidden blood or other changes that may be signs of cancer.
  - They are less invasive and easier to do.
  - They are less likely to find polyps than the other types of tests.
  - Colonoscopy will be needed if results are abnormal.



# ACS Colorectal Cancer Screening Guidelines

At age 50, both men and women should begin regular screening and have one of the screening tests listed here or on the next slide:

## *Tests that find both polyps and cancer*

- Flexible sigmoidoscopy (FSIG) every 5 years\*, or
- Colonoscopy every 10 years, or
- Double contrast barium enema (DCBE) every 5 years\*, or
- CT colonography (virtual colonoscopy) every 5 years\*

\*Colonoscopy should be done if anything is found by these tests



# ACS Colorectal Cancer Screening Guidelines


At age 50, both men and women should begin regular screening and have one of the screening tests listed here or on the previous slide:

## *Tests that find mainly cancer*

- Guaiac-based fecal occult blood test (gFOBT) every year\*, or
- Fecal immunochemical test (FIT) every year\*, or
- Stool DNA test (sDNA) every 3 years\*

\*Colonoscopy should be done if anything is found by these tests





# ACS Colorectal Cancer Screening Guidelines

Adults who are at higher risk for CRC should talk with a doctor about their medical history to decide what screening test and schedule are best for them. They may need to begin screening earlier.

The American Cancer Society has specific guidelines for adults who are at higher risk for CRC. For more information, call 1-800-227-2345.

So what can you do to prevent  
and beat colorectal cancer?

# What you can do

- Stay at a healthy weight
- Be active
  - ✓ At least 150 minutes of moderate or 75 minutes of vigorous intensity activity per week, or an equivalent combination, preferably spread throughout the week
- Limit sedentary behavior





# What you can do

- Eat right

- ✓ Choose foods and beverages in amounts that help you get to and stay at a healthy weight
- ✓ Eat at least 2½ cups of vegetables and fruits each day
- ✓ Choose whole grains
- ✓ Limit red meats (like beef, pork, or lamb) and processed meats (like hot dogs or luncheon meats)

- Limit alcohol

- ✓ No more than 2 drinks a day for men and 1 for women



# What you can do

- If you are age 50 or older, get tested for colorectal cancer.
- Talk with a doctor about which screening test is best for you.
- Talk with a doctor about your medical history and your family history to find out if you need to start testing earlier or have more frequent tests.



# What you can do

- Screening tests offer the best way to prevent CRC or find it early. Finding cancer early gives you a better chance for successful treatment.
- Early CRC usually has no symptoms. Don't wait for symptoms to occur. Treatment is most effective when CRC is found early.



# More information

You can get more information on colorectal cancer on our website, [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org), or call 1-800-227-2345 and talk with one of our cancer information specialists.

- Colorectal Cancer: Early Detection (also in Spanish)
- Colorectal Cancer (also in Spanish)
- Colorectal Cancer Overview (also in Spanish and Chinese)
- Five Myths About Colon Cancer

**Thank you!**

