

# What you need to know: Colorectal Cancer

## Early Detection Is Key!

Of cancers affecting both men and women, colorectal cancer is the second leading cancer killer in the United States, and it doesn't have to be. Colon cancer is highly preventable and treatable. Yet more than 140,000 people are diagnosed with and more than 50,000 people die from colon cancer each year. The key to improving these statistics is to ensure every person completes a routine colon cancer screening test, which can stop the disease before it starts.

**Several methods can be used. Each test has advantages and disadvantages. Please talk with your healthcare provider to determine which test is best for you based on your preferences.**

If you're **healthy and between 45 – 75 years old**, with a referral from your primary care provider, you can call directly to schedule your screening colonoscopy. We have made the scheduling easier, so you do not need to first schedule an office visit with a specialist. Many patients appreciate this option as they save on co-pays and time away from work. **Call your primary care provider at 425.690.3535 for a screening colonoscopy referral or ask for one at your next visit.**

## Avoid Surprise Costs

If you have a screening test other than colonoscopy and the result is positive (abnormal), you will need to have a colonoscopy. Some insurers consider this to be a **diagnostic** (not screening) colonoscopy, so you may have to pay the usual deductible and co-pay. **Before you get a FIT or FIT/DNA screening test, check with your insurance carrier about what it might mean if you need a colonoscopy as a result of the screening test, and how much you should expect to pay for it.**



	COLONOSCOPY Best Test	FIT	FIT - DNA
Who Is A Good Candidate For This Test?	Most people are good candidates. This test is the best way to find and remove polyps early. Polyps can be precancerous.	A great option for people hesitant about colonoscopy.	Another option for people hesitant about colonoscopy.
What Is It?	The patient is sedated so a doctor can examine the inside of the colon for precancerous polyps. Bowel prep is required and you do need an adult driver for transportation.	A stool based Fecal Immunochemical Test (FIT) can be performed at home and sent to a lab, which looks for trace amounts of blood.	Stool is collected at home and sent out for testing. The study looks for blood or DNA markers associated with colon cancer.
How Much Does It Cost?	Varies by insurance. Screening tests must be covered by insurance and are less expensive than diagnostic tests.	Low cost option	Varies by insurance. Some plans cover the test, but others do not.
When Should It Be Repeated?	Every 10 years	Annually	Every 3 years
Where Is It Performed?	Outpatient surgical center or hospital	Test kit provided by the provider and completed in the patient's home	Test kit shipped to the patient and completed in the patient's home
Are There Any Risks Or Negatives?	Complications are rare but include bleeding, infection and bowel wall injury.	No physical risks. A positive test means that a diagnostic colonoscopy is required.	No physical risks. A positive test means that a diagnostic colonoscopy is required.



VALLEY MEDICAL CENTER



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