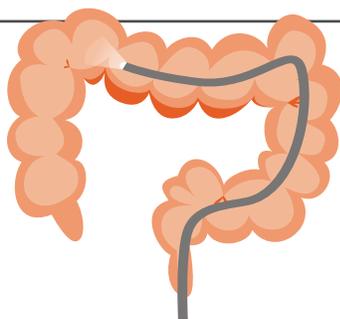


COLORECTAL CANCER SCREENING

COLONOSCOPY

Colonoscopy is doctor-recommended as the gold standard for detection and prevention of colon cancer.

Up to **90%** of colon cancers can be prevented using colonoscopy.



During a colonoscopy, a doctor views the colon using a colonoscope as air is pumped into it for the best view of the colon lining.

Benefits

- Most comprehensive exam
- Ability to look for polyps in the rectum and entire colon
- Detects and removes cancerous polyps during procedure
- Needed every 10 years, varies depending on risk factors

Drawbacks

- Thorough cleansing of the colon required before test
- Sedation is usually used – you must have someone with you to drive you home



Learn more at Avera.org/colon

Colonoscopy is the most comprehensive exam to prevent cancer. However, screening of any kind is more effective than no screening. If colonoscopy is not an option, consider these other tests.

SIGMOIDOSCOPY

This procedure is similar to a colonoscopy but not as effective. The test only looks at the rectum and lower colon – not the upper colon. People typically are not sedated.

Benefits

- Minimal discomfort and complications are rare
- Less extensive colon cleansing required
- Sedation not required
- Polyps removed during procedure

Disadvantages

- Not as effective as colonoscopy: abnormalities in the upper colon won't be detected
- Bowel cleansing required, not as extensive
- Additional procedures such as colonoscopy may be necessary if abnormalities detected
- Availability is not as widespread

STOOL BLOOD TEST

These tests detect blood in the stool through a stool sample, which may signal colon cancer.

Benefits

- Can be done at home
- No colon cleansing or dietary restrictions required before test

Drawbacks

- Least effective means of detecting cancer
- False-positive test results possible
- Must be done annually
- Additional procedures such as colonoscopy may be necessary if blood is in the stool