

# Stay On Top Of Your Screenings

Cancer screenings are an excellent investment in your health. They can help your physician or provider find several types of cancer early, before you notice any symptoms. Early detection is important as it may make the cancer easier to treat.

Avera Medical Group's (AMG) cancer screening guidelines are outlined here. However, each person is unique, so talk with your physician or provider about the screening that is best for you.

## Colorectal Cancer

A colonoscopy is the preferred method of colon cancer screening as it provides both cancer detection and prevention.

The procedure is done by using a long, flexible tube — called a colonoscope — that is about the thickness of your finger. Your physician or provider inserts the tube into the anus and moves it slowly into the rectum and colon.

Talk to your physician or provider about the availability of other cancer screening options, such as Cologuard and FIT test.

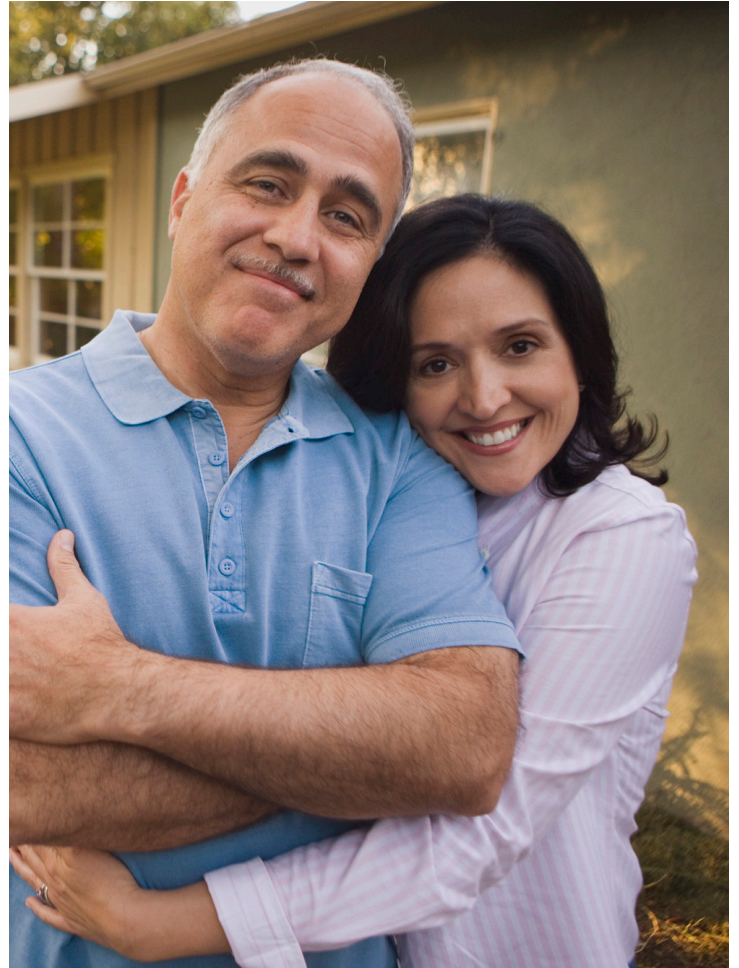
### Who should get screened?

People should get a colonoscopy once every 10 years starting at age 45.

### What to expect

Generally, here's what you can expect:

- Prior to the colonoscopy, your physician or provider may give you medicine through a vein to help you relax and deal with any discomfort from the procedure.
- For the procedure itself, you will lie on your side or on your back while the colonoscope is moved slowly through the large intestine. You may feel pressure, bloating or cramping at times.
- Your physician or provider may use the colonoscope to inject air into your colon to make it easier to see the inside surfaces. The colonoscope also has a water jet and suction tool that your physician or provider may use to improve visibility during the procedure.
- Your physician or provider will check your colon and may take pictures. If an abnormal tissue growth, called a polyp, is found, your physician or provider may take it out.
- As the colonoscope is slowly taken out, the lining is again carefully examined.
- From start to finish, the colonoscopy usually takes 15 to 60 minutes.



If you were given medicine during the exam, someone must take you home. Even if you feel alert after the procedure, your judgment and reflexes may be affected by the medicine for the rest of the day, making it unsafe for you to drive or operate any machinery.

You may have some cramping or bloating because of the air introduced into the colon during the exam. This should disappear quickly as soon as you're able to pass gas. Generally, you should be able to eat a full meal after the exam, but your doctor may limit your diet and activities, especially if you had polyps removed.

### **How to prepare**

The colon must be completely clean for the procedure to be accurate and complete.

Your physician or provider will give you detailed instructions about the dietary restrictions to follow and the cleansing routine to use, which may include a special cleansing liquid, laxatives or enemas. Laxatives help cleanse the colon by loosening stools and increasing bowel movements. Enemas help cleanse the colon by introducing a liquid through the anus into the large intestine.

Inform your physician or provider of your current medications as well as any allergies to medications several days prior to the exam.

In particular, be sure to note aspirin products, arthritis medications, blood thinners, insulin and iron products. You should tell your physician or provider if you require antibiotics before undergoing dental procedures, since you may need antibiotics before a colonoscopy as well.

---

*Avera's mission is to make a positive impact in the lives and health of persons and communities by providing quality services guided by Christian values. If you think you may have problems paying part of your bill, contact your local business office or billing staff. We can discuss payment options that may be available to you.*



© Copyright 2021  
Content from Avera is protected by U.S. copyright laws. All rights reserved. This health-related information is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice or for the care that patients receive from their health care provider.