

Questions to Ask Your Doctor

There are several colon screening tests that can be used to find polyps or colon cancer. The benefits and risks may vary for each. Talking to your doctor about which screening would best suit you is very important.

Several questions that may help guide you while talking to your doctor:

? Do I need to get a screening test for colorectal cancer?

? What screening test(s) would you recommend for me? Why?

? How do I prepare for the screening test(s)?

? Do I need to change my diet (eating habits) or my medications?

? What should I expect to happen during the test(s)? Will it be uncomfortable or painful? Are there risks involved?

? When, where and from whom will I get the results?

Who do I call for insurance questions?

- AFLAC: 989-7810
- Medicaid Assistance Program, DPHSS: 735-7245 / 7241 / 7239 / 7328
- Medically Indigent Program (MIP), DPHSS: Dededo: 635-7466 / 7485 / 7487
Inarajan: 828-7524
Mangilao: 735-7245 / 7241 / 7239 / 7328
- Medicare Assistance Program, DPHSS: 735-7421
- Netcare: 472-3610
- SelectCare: 477-9808
- StayWell: 477-5091
- TakeCare: 647-3526
- TRICARE Area Office-Pacific: 1-888-777-8343

Guam Resources:

American Cancer Society
Guam Field Office: 477-9451

Edward M. Calvo Cancer Foundation:
472-6854

Guam Breast & Cervical Cancer Early
Detection Program, DPHSS: 735-0671/2

Guam Cancer Care: 969-2223

Guam Comprehensive Cancer Control
Program, DPHSS: 735-0670/7335

University of Guam
Cancer Research Center: 735-3036
Guam Cancer Registry: 735-2988/2989

Guam Comprehensive Cancer Control Program
Department of Public Health and Social Services
123 Chalan Kareta
Mangilao, Guam 96913-6304
☎ 735-0670 / 0673 / 7335
☎ 735-7500



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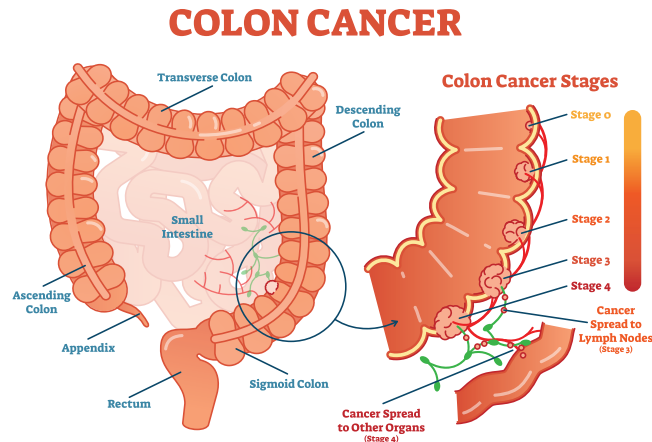
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CANCER

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What is colorectal cancer?

Colorectal cancer starts from the polyps in the colon or rectum. Sometimes it is called colon cancer, for short. A polyp is a growth inside the colon that is not normal. Over time, polyps can turn into cancer if they are not removed.



Is colon cancer common among Guam's people?

Colon cancer can affect both men and women. On Guam, colon cancer is the 4th most common cancer, and the 3rd most deadly.

From the years 2008-2012, colon cancer accounted for about 10% of new cancer cases, and 11% of cancer deaths on Guam.

(Source: University of Guam, Cancer Research Center of Guam, Guam Cancer Registry, September 15, 2014)

What are the signs and symptoms?

- ▶ Stomach pain, aches, or cramps that don't go away
- ▶ Losing weight and you don't know why
- ▶ Blood in or on your stool (bowel movement)

Colon cancer often has no warning signs in the early stages, making it important to get regular screenings.

Colorectal cancer is on the rise among young adults, according to the Journal of the National Cancer Institute. If you have any questions about colorectal cancer, make an appointment with your healthcare provider.

Source: Division of Cancer Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

What are the risk factors?

- ▶ If you are 50 years old or older
- ▶ A personal or family history of inflammatory bowel disease
- ▶ A family history of colorectal cancer or colorectal polyps
- ▶ Lack of regular physical activity
- ▶ A diet low in fruit and vegetables
- ▶ A low-fiber and high-fat diet, or a diet high in processed meats
- ▶ Overweight and obesity
- ▶ Alcohol consumption
- ▶ Tobacco use

What can I do to reduce my risk?

- ▶ Regular exercise of at least 30 minutes/day
- ▶ A diet low in animal fats
- ▶ A diet that includes at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables, and whole grains that are high in fiber
- ▶ Limiting alcohol consumption
- ▶ Avoiding tobacco use
- ▶ Screening for colorectal cancer regularly, beginning at age 50



Why is cancer screening important?

A person's chances for successful cancer treatment greatly increases if the cancer is found or detected in the early stage. However, between 2007- 2015, 75% of Guamanians diagnosed with colon cancer were already in Stage 3 or higher. This is alarming since a small precancerous polyp can take about 10 years to develop into cancer.

(Source: Pacific Regional Central Cancer Registry (PRCCR), 2007-2015 adult incident cases, as of July 2018)

Screening Tests

The U.S. Preventive Services task Force recommends that adults age 50 to 75 be screened for colorectal cancer.

Talk to your doctor about which test is right for you.

STOOL TESTS

The **guaiac-based fecal occult blood test (gFOBT)** uses the chemical guaiac to detect blood in the stool. For this test, you receive a test kit from your health care provider. At home, you use a stick or brush to obtain a small amount of stool. You return the test kit to the doctor or a lab, where the stool samples are checked for the presence of blood. *How often: Once a year.*

The **fecal immunochemical test (FIT)** uses antibodies to detect blood in the stool. *How often: Once a year.*

The **FIT-DNA test** (also referred to as the stool DNA test) combines the FIT with a test that detects altered DNA in the stool. For this test, you collect an entire bowel movement and send it to a lab, where it is checked for cancer cells. *How often: Once every 1 or 3 years.*

SIGMOIDOSCOPY

The doctor puts a short, thin, flexible, lighted tube into your rectum. The doctor checks for polyps or cancer inside the rectum and lower third of the colon. *How often: Every 5 years, or every 10 years with a FIT every year.*

COLONOSCOPY

The doctor uses a longer, thin, flexible, lighted tube to check for polyps or cancer inside the rectum and the entire colon. During the test, the doctor can find and remove most polyps and some cancers. Colonoscopy also is used as a follow-up test if anything unusual is found during one of the other screening tests. *How often: Every 10 years (for people who do not have an increased risk of colorectal cancer).*

CT COLONOGRAPHY (Virtual Colonoscopy)

Computed tomography (CT) colonography, also called a virtual colonoscopy, uses x-rays and computers to produce images of the entire colon, which are displayed on a computer screen for the doctor to analyze. *How often: Every 5 years.*

COLORECTAL CANCER SCREENING SAVES LIVES!