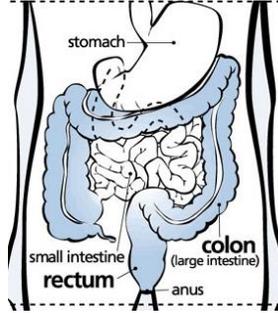


Colorectal Cancer

Colorectal cancer is cancer that occurs in the colon or rectum. Sometimes it is called colon cancer, for short. As the drawing shows, the colon is the large intestine or large bowel. The rectum is the passageway that connects the colon to the anus.



“The earlier you can detect cancer, the better you are. I have to remember where I was and where I am now. I’m a survivor, and I always have to be thankful for that.”

Keith Peltier with wife Cathy, West Fargo, N.D.
Husband and father
Owner of Proceeds, Inc.
Colorectal cancer survivor

Why the Concern

Colorectal cancer is the third leading cause of cancer incidence in North Dakota. Colorectal cancer accounts for 400 new cancer diagnoses and 140 people dying from the disease each year. This doesn’t have to be!

If everybody age 50 or older had regular screening tests, at least 60 percent of deaths from this cancer could be avoided. So if you are 50 and older, start screening now!

Are You at Risk?

- Both men and women get colorectal cancer
- Colorectal cancer is most often found in people 50 and older
- Risk increases with age
- Risk increases if you have a family history of colorectal cancer or colorectal polyps
- Risk increases if you have inflammatory bowel disease

People at high risk may need earlier or more frequent tests than other people. Talk to your doctor about when to begin screening and how often you should be screened.

Screening Tests

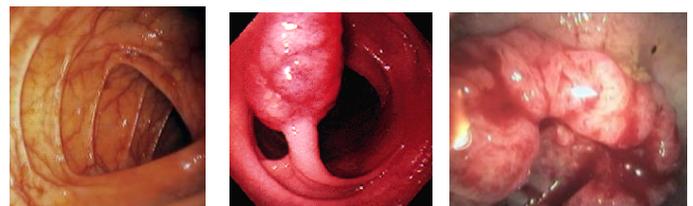
- Fecal Occult Blood Test (FOBT) or Fecal Immunoassay Test (FIT)
 - Known as a take home stool test
 - Colonoscopy
 - Flexible Sigmoidoscopy
- “The best test is the one that gets done”*

Symptoms

It is very common for people with colorectal cancer or pre-cancer to experience no symptoms at all. Some people with polyps or colorectal cancer do have symptoms which may include:

- Blood in or on your stool (bowel movement)
- Pain, aches, or cramps in your stomach that happen a lot and you don’t know why
- A change in bowel habits, such as having stools that are narrower than usual
- Losing weight and you don’t know why

Screening Saves Lives



Normal Colon → Polyp → Colon Cancer

If you’re 50 or older, get screened for colorectal cancer. Screening for colorectal cancer could save your life. Here’s how:

- Prevention – By finding polyps in the colon and removing them **before** they become cancer.
- Early Detection – By finding cancer **early** when treatment works best.

Planning for a cancer-free future.

FACT sheet developed by the North Dakota Cancer Coalition. Some of the content in this fact sheet is courtesy of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s *Screen for Life: National Colorectal Cancer Action Campaign*.

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