



Men's Health and Colorectal Cancer: The Importance of Prevention and Screening with Follow Up

Snapshot: Colorectal Cancer (CRC) in America

Every year, more than 80,000 men in the United States receive a diagnosis of CRC and more than 25,000 die of it.¹ In the United States, CRC is the third most common type of cancer and cause of cancer death among men.² **CRC diagnoses among adults younger than 55 have doubled in the past two decades, and the proportion of individuals diagnosed with advanced stage disease has also increased.**³

CRC affects men in some populations more than others. People living in the South and Midwest experience particularly high rates of CRC.⁴ Additionally, men who are American Indian/Alaska Native or Black experience higher rates of CRC.⁴

CRC Risks & Prevention

Many factors affect men's risk of CRC. Regardless of age, men who have one or more risk factors should talk to a healthcare provider about starting screening.

Risk Factors That *Can* Be Modified

Most (55%) of all CRC cases are caused by risk factors that can be changed.⁴

- Obesity
- Smoking
- Certain foods
- Type 2 Diabetes mellitus
- Alcohol use

Risk Factors That *Can't* Be Modified

Talk to your doctor about these risk factors:⁶

- Family history of CRC
- Age
- Some health conditions
- Genetic syndromes
- Race/Ethnicity
- Sex at birth
- Inflammatory bowel disease
- Personal history of polyps

CRC Screening Saves Lives

CRC screening does more than just detect cancer. Colonoscopies can find and remove precancerous growths, called polyps, before they become cancerous. Screening is a powerful tool: CRC survival rates are greater than 90% when caught in early (localized) stages.⁷

Several types of screenings can be used to detect CRC, including stool tests, flexible sigmoidoscopies, CT colonography, and colonoscopies.⁴ Although screening for most people begins at age 45, people with certain risk factors may need to be screened earlier or more frequently.

Colorectal Cancer Screening Guidelines

The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommends CRC screenings for all adults aged 45-75. Depending on the type of screening, a person may need to be screened.⁹

- Every 1-3 years (stool tests),
- Every 5 years (flexible sigmoidoscopies, computed tomography colonography), or
- Every 10 years (colonoscopy).

If a colonoscopy identifies and removes polyps, a person will need follow-up colonoscopies, often within 3-5 years.¹⁰



Social Determinants of Health and CRC

76%

of CRC survivors are worried about covering current or future treatment costs.⁵

26%

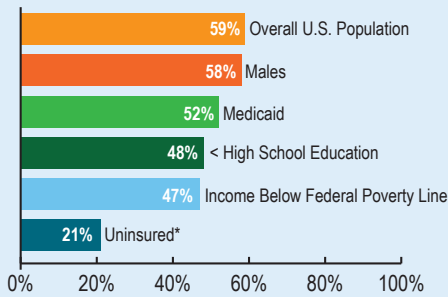
of CRC survivors report experiencing food insecurity in the past year.⁵

26%

of people who had never been screened for CRC said financial and access issues were barriers to getting a colonoscopy.⁸

Addressing social determinants of health, such as food insecurity and transportation challenges associated with adherence to medical appointments and follow-up visits, is integral to CRC prevention, screening, early detection, timely treatment, and survivorship.

Percent of Americans Over Age 45 Who Are Up to Date on CRC Screening⁴



*It is important to note that many uninsured Americans are low-income workers and employed adults.

Despite effective tests to screen for CRC, **only 58% of American men over the age of 45 are up to date on CRC screening.**⁴ Screening rates are especially low among people with some low socioeconomic status characteristics, who may have limited access to health care or resources to pay for screenings.⁴

CRC Screening and Follow up

CRC screening is just the first step in CRC prevention and care. An abnormal stool test requires follow up, such as a colonoscopy, from a physician. However, follow-up rates are low. In one study of more than 30,000 people, only 53% of patients with positive stool-based tests received a follow-up colonoscopy within a year.¹¹ Some people were less likely to receive follow-up colonoscopies, including those who were on Medicaid, smoked, or had comorbidities.¹¹



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Consortium of National Networks
SelfMade Health Network
(CDC National Disparity Network)

<http://www.selfmadehealth.org/>

[@SelfMadeHealth](https://www.instagram.com/SelfMadeHealth)

<https://www.facebook.com/SelfMadeHealthNetwork/>

Improving CRC Outcomes for Men in Your Community

There are many ways to help improve CRC outcomes for men in your community, health system, or state, including

- Informing men about CRC risk factors,
- Providing resources to help men find affordable screenings,
- Identifying and addressing CRC disparities and food insecurity,
- Sharing free resources to help quit commercial tobacco,
- Advocating for improved coverage of CRC prevention and screening, and
- Promoting programs that help improve cancer screening and care.

Utilize the following resources to help improve CRC prevention, detection, and treatment for all:

Source	Resource	
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Resources	Colorectal Cancer Control Program	Colorectal Cancer Screening Change Package
	Colorectal Cancer Statistics	Tips From Former Smokers
	Healthy Eating for a Healthy Weight	Places: Local Data for Better Health
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	Tools to Help Consumers Eat Healthy on a Budget	
U.S. Department of Agriculture	Dietary Guidelines for Americans: 2020-2025	My Plate Plan
Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services	Health Equity Services in the 2024 Physician Fee Schedule Final Rule	
National Cancer Institute	Support Services Directory	
Patient Advocate Foundation	Copay Relief Program	
SelfMade Health Network (CDC National Network)	Commercial Tobacco Cessation Messaging Toolkit for Medicaid Healthcare Providers and Multi-disciplinary Teams, Including Community Health Workers and Patient Navigators, in All Settings	From the Lungs to the Heart: How Tobacco-related Diseases and Cancers Affect Men's Health
		Understanding Health Risk: Using Family Health Histories to Promote Health
Cancer.Net (American Society of Clinical Oncology)	Navigating Cancer Care	When Cancer is Not Your Only Health Concern
	Financial Considerations	Resources for U.S. Veterans
National Association of Community Health Centers	What Is a Community Health Center?	
National Colorectal Cancer Screening Roundtable	Resource Center	2023 Lead Time Messaging Guidebook
	80% in Every Community Employer Guide	Steps for Increasing Colorectal Cancer Screening Rates: A Manual for Primary Care Practices
American Cancer Society	Insurance Coverage for Colorectal Cancer Screening	American Cancer Society Guideline for Diet and Physical Activity
	Leadership in Oncology Navigation Training and Credentialing Program	
The Community Guide	Cancer Screening: Patient Navigation Services to Increase Colorectal Cancer Screening and Advance Health Equity	
Fight Colorectal Cancer	Provider Finder	Fight CRC Clinical Trial Finder
	Paying for Colon and Rectal Cancer Treatment	
Colorectal Cancer Alliance	Financial Assistance	Colonoscopy Prep Tips
Nourish My Health	Nourish My Health	
Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics	Navigating Colorectal Cancer: Risk Factors, Screening and Lifestyle Tips	Find a Nutrition Expert
Giant Food	Healthier Together: Food as Medicine	

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