

# DID YOU KNOW?

1 in 23 develops colon cancer.



Colon cancer affects men and women equally.



1 in 5 are diagnosed under 54.



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## GET YOUR REAR IN GEAR®



Get Your Rear in Gear®, Tour de Tush®, and Caboose Cup™ are the signature fundraising events of the Colon Cancer Coalition. Held in nearly 50 cities annually, funds raised stay in local communities to build screening, awareness, and patient support programs.

Find an event near you at [coloncancercoalition.org/events](http://coloncancercoalition.org/events)

For more information about colon cancer, visit: [coloncancercoalition.org](http://coloncancercoalition.org)

Help us increase awareness by liking, sharing, and following us.



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## COLON CANCER SCREENING: 101

Get Educated.  
Get Screened.  
Get over the embarrassment.



[coloncancercoalition.org](http://coloncancercoalition.org)

# SCREENING OPTIONS

## At-home stool-based tests

These tests look for blood and/or abnormal cells in your stool. Testing kits are mailed back or returned to your health care provider. If blood or abnormalities are found, a colonoscopy is needed.

- Fecal Immunochemical Test (FIT): every year
- High Sensitivity Fecal Occult Blood Test (FOBT): every year
- mt-sDNA stool test: every 3 years

## Visual screenings

At a medical center your doctor will look at your colon and rectum for polyps or evidence of cancer. Colonoscopies can also prevent cancer by removing polyps when they are found. These exams require a full colon cleansing (prep) on the day before the test.

- Colonoscopy: Every 10 years with normal results\*
- Virtual colonoscopy: Every 5 years\*

*\*Your doctor may recommend different timing for visual screening based on your health history and previous results.*

### A note about advanced colorectal polyps.

If a polyp is removed during a colonoscopy, ask your doctor about earlier or more frequent screening for yourself and your first-degree relatives (parents, siblings, and children). Earlier, more frequent screening may be recommended.

**Talk to your doctor about the best test for you.**

**GET EDUCATED.  
GET SCREENED.**

# COLONOSCOPY TIPS

No screening option is more effective than a colonoscopy when it comes to finding and preventing colon cancer. Follow these three steps to lessen the anxiety and make your colonoscopy more comfortable.

## 1. Get scheduled.



The worst part of a colonoscopy may be picking up the phone to make the appointment. Keep in mind that you may need to take time off from work, for the prep and the actual test day.

**! Bonus Tip:** Schedule the colonoscopy for Monday morning, then you can do the prep on Sunday and only miss one day of work. And schedule it first thing in the morning since you will be fasting and want to eat as soon as you can!

## 2. Get prepped.



A clean colon makes it easier to find and remove polyps. Be sure to follow the instructions from your physician and clarify any confusion with your health care provider in advance.

In most cases, cleansing the digestive tract means eating white foods for several days prior and a clear liquid diet on the day before. Stock your kitchen with items like:

- white rice, pasta, and bread
- mashed potatoes (no skins)
- canned fruits and veggies
- clear fruit juices (apple is best)
- Jell-o (but avoid red, orange, or purple coloring)
- clear soft drinks (like Sierra Mist or 7-up, many clinics even allow root beer!)
- coffee and tea (no milk or creamer)
- broth

**! Bonus Tip:** Limit your meat consumption for a few days before to ensure the prep your doctor prescribes is effective and works quickly.

Your physician will prescribe a liquid laxative. To help the drink go down:

- Keep the fluid cold
- Drink through a straw placed at the back of the mouth
- Suck on tart hard candies or lemon to mute the taste

**! Bonus Tip:** If the instructions are to mix with another drink (like Gatorade) don't mix the drink with your favorite flavor – it will no longer be your favorite!

Being close to a bathroom on prep day is essential. Many people find using moistened wipes instead of toilet paper makes the process more comfortable.

**! Bonus Tip:** Apply hemorrhoid cream (or even diaper rash ointment) before starting the prep to protect your skin and ease some discomfort. Then reapply as often as needed.

## 3. Get zen.



Being relaxed on test day is important. Increased anxiety can make the process less comfortable. Don't be afraid to ask questions about sedation, the process, or managing discomfort.

After your colonoscopy, ask questions about the results. Then find out when you should have your next colonoscopy, or if there are any further steps you need to take.

**! Bonus Tip:** A friend or loved one is required to wait with you. They will help you stay relaxed, and can join you for a bite to eat after the procedure. You will be hungry!