

Colorectal Cancer Screening



UHN

ARE YOU 50-74 years of AGE? Have you been Screened for Colorectal Cancer?

Why should I be screened for Colorectal Cancer?

Cancer of the colon or lower bowel is the second leading cause of death from cancer in North America.

Colorectal cancer can happen in men and women who are 50 years of age and older. Healthy adults who are 50 years of age or older should having a screening test every 5 years.

What is Colorectal Cancer?

Colorectal cancer is cancer of the colon or rectum. The colon is the large part of the intestine, also known as the large intestine. Food that you have eaten moves from the stomach into the small, then large intestine, where it is broken down and used as energy for your body. Stools are formed in the large intestine and then leave your body from the colon and rectum as a bowel movement.

What type of screening is right for me?

There are several types of screening depending on your personal health history. The good news is that colorectal cancer is preventable. This kind of cancer grows from polyps ('**pall – lips**') or grape-like growths on the walls of the colon and rectum. A screening test will help your health provider find these polyps and remove them before they become cancerous.

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Some people are at higher risk for colorectal cancer. If you have a family history - a close relative who had colorectal cancer or if you have inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), you may be at higher risk for colorectal cancer. Talk to your doctor about which tests are best for you.

One of these tests is known as Flexible Sigmoidoscopy which is being offered at UHN: Toronto General Hospital Site. If you are 50 years or older this test may be right for you.

Ask yourself these 5 questions to see if a Flexible Sigmoidoscopy is right for you. "Yes" means you agree with the statement; "No" means you don't agree with the statement.

1. I am between 50 and 74 years of age.....	YES	NO
2. I have no history of bowel cancer or polys?.....	YES	NO
3. I have no immediate family history of bowel cancer?	YES	NO
4. I have no history of inflammatory bowel disease such as Colitis or Crohn's?	YES	NO
5. I have no rectal bleeding or sudden / chronic changes in bowel habits, diarrhea or constipation?.....	YES	NO

If you answered "Yes" to all these questions, you should think about being screened for colorectal cancer. Flexible Sigmoidoscopy may be the right test for you.

What are the benefits of having a Flexible Sigmoidoscopy?

Colorectal cancer begins when a polyp grows on the inside wall of the colon. In most cases, these polyps are not cancerous. They usually grow slowly over 10 years or more. If cancerous polyps are not removed, they can grow larger and then treatment is more difficult.

Screening finds colorectal cancer early when the chance for a full recovery is very high. If found early, this type of cancer may be cured 90% of the time in most people. The chance of curing this type of cancer is 90% when it is found early. This can reduce the chance of death from bowel cancer by 60 to 80%. If a polyp is found in the lower part of your colon during the procedure, a biopsy is sent for testing.



So, what is Flexible Sigmoidoscopy?

A Flexible Sigmoidoscopy is a screening test that uses a thin flexible tube, which shows the inside of the bowel, is put into the rectum and moved up. The examination is done by specially trained Registered Nurses. A Flexible Sigmoidoscopy can reliably find any cancer polyps in the lower half of the colon. Patients with abnormal findings will be advised about follow up procedures.

What are some of the advantages of this test?

1. You do not need any anesthetic or sedation
2. You do not need to take a lot of time off work and you can drive your car or take transit home
3. It takes about 20 minutes.

How do I get referred for screening?

Please visit your family doctor and ask to be referred for screening. Once the referral is made, you will be contacted by the University Health Network to schedule your appointment. Appointments are being offered within 3 weeks.

For more information, please call

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