

Get tested for Colorectal Cancer

If you are 50 or older, get a colonoscopy (colorectal cancer test). To get a colonoscopy, call your CHN front desk. We'll set it up for you.

What is colorectal cancer?

Colorectal cancer is when cells in the colon or rectum change and grow out of control. These cells can grow into tumors. Tumors can sometimes cause cancer.

What are the signs?

Most of the time, there are no signs of colorectal cancer. But, you may have signs like:

- losing weight quickly
- bleeding from the anus (butt)
- diarrhea (watery poop)
- constipation (can't poop)

Why should I be tested?

Tests look for tumors in your colon. If you have any tumors, your doctor can find them and take them out before they turn into cancer. After tumors turn into cancer, it is harder to treat them. The tumors could kill you.

Get tested if you:

- Are 50 or older
- Have someone in your family with colorectal cancer
- Have diabetes or sores in your colon
- Are very overweight
- Smoke
- Drink a lot of alcohol
- Eat a lot of red or processed meat

What is a colonoscopy?

A colonoscopy is a test that looks for colorectal cancer. Right before the test, you take medicine that makes you sleepy. During the test, your doctor gently puts a small tube into your anus (butt). The tube has a tiny camera on the end of it to look inside your rectum and colon. If your doctor sees any tumors, they will often take them out right away.

Most of the time, the test does not hurt. You may feel gassy or cramping. The test takes about 1 hour.

What happens before the test?

You will drink a lot of medicine to clean out your insides. You will have to use the bathroom often. One week before the test, you may have to stop taking some of your other medicines. Talk to your doctor about the medicines you take. Do not eat or drink anything on the day of the test.

What happens after the test?

You will rest until the medicine wears off. You may need to pass gas. You need a friend or family member to take you home. You can go back to eating like you did before. Your doctor will talk to you about the results after the test or at your next visit.

Call your doctor if you:

- See blood in your stool (poop)
- Have very bad pain in your belly
- Have a fever and chills

What are the risks of the test?

A colonoscopy is safe, but there are some risks.

- If a lump is taken out, you may have bleeding. This often stops on its own.
- In rare cases, the test can cause a tear in the colon or rectum. This can cause pain and you may need surgery to fix it.