

# TALKING WITH YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER ABOUT COLORECTAL CANCER

Screening tests for colorectal cancer can save 30,000 lives each year. These tests not only detect colorectal cancer early, but can prevent colorectal cancer. In one test, non-cancerous polyps are removed before they become cancer. When you turn 50 years old, or if you are younger and have a family or personal history of colorectal polyps, colorectal cancer, inflammatory bowel disease, or breast, uterine or endometrial cancer, you need to talk to your health care provider about colorectal cancer screening tests. Here are some questions to help you begin this important conversation.

1. I just turned 50 years old. Should I be tested for colorectal cancer?
2. I don't have any family history of colorectal cancer or of colorectal polyps. Should I still be screened?
3. Or..... My medical history and/or family medical history put me at an increased risk for colorectal cancer; should I be screened at a younger age and more often?
4. I understand there are a number of screening tests available, would you tell me about each of these tests and the pros and cons of each?
5. I don't know which screening test is appropriate for me now. Which test do you recommend and why?
6. Will you perform the test? If not, who will?
7. Will I be awake or asleep during the test?
8. Will the test hurt?
9. How will I learn the results of the test?
10. What kind of follow-up care will I need if the tests show a problem?
11. If the tests show nothing wrong, when should I be tested again?
12. What is the cost of these tests? Will my insurance cover the cost?



*March is National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month, founded by the Cancer Research Foundation of America. Talk with your health care provider about colorectal cancer. Colorectal cancer is preventable, and is easy to treat and often curable when detected early. Ask your health care provider what kind of screening test you should have and when.*