

# SEVEN THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT COLORECTAL CANCER SCREENINGS

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## WHY IS SCREENING IMPORTANT?



Colorectal cancer screening can save lives! Colorectal cancer is the second-leading cause of cancer deaths in the US. The screening tests available for colorectal are easy to complete, and some can even be done from the comfort of your own home. Colon cancer is one of the few cancers that can actually be prevented through screening (colonoscopy). Other screening tests can help you detect the cancer early before it has a chance to grow and spread. Colorectal cancer caught in the early stages has a 5-year survival rate of over 90%. But only 39% of cases are diagnosed in early stages due to low screening rates. When the disease spreads to distant organs, the 5-year survival rate drops to 11%. It is important to keep up to date with screening, no matter which screening option you choose.

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## WHAT ARE MY SCREENING OPTIONS?



The Fecal Immunochemical Test (FIT) is a quick, safe, and easy test that can detect colorectal cancer early through the presence of small amounts of blood in the stool that may not be visible to the naked eye. The Multitarget stool DNA test (mt-sDNA) (Cologuard) detects altered DNA and blood in your stool. The FIT and Cologuard tests can both be done in the comfort of your own home and involve collecting a stool sample that is then sent to a lab for testing. Colonoscopy is another screening option. For the colonoscopy, you will need to fast and drink lots of fluids prior to the test. The doctor will insert a long thin tube with a camera through your rectum all the way to the end of your colon to look for the cause of the blood. You will be sedated for the colonoscopy and will wake up when it is over (about 30 minutes).

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## WHICH TEST SHOULD I GET?



The best test is the one that gets done! If you have trouble deciding which test is right for you, contact your provider and they can help you decide.

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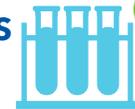
## HOW OFTEN DO I GET SCREENED?



This varies by test. For FIT, you should complete the test once per year. For Cologuard, you should complete the test once every three years. For colonoscopy, you should have the test once every 10 years (or more frequently if you had polyps removed in a previous colonoscopy).

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## WHAT HAPPENS IF MY TEST IS NEGATIVE?



If your test is negative (or normal), congratulations, there is nothing to do until your next screening! Your provider will remind you when your next screening is due. In the meantime, you can encourage your family and friends to get screened also!

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## WHAT HAPPENS IF MY TEST IS POSITIVE?



If your test is positive, or abnormal, your doctor will schedule you for additional follow-up. For a positive FIT or Cologuard, you will be scheduled for a colonoscopy. The colonoscopy will confirm why you had a positive FIT or Cologuard test. During a colonoscopy, the doctor will examine the inside of your colon and remove any polyps - these will be tested in a lab for the presence of cancer cells. If cancer is detected, you will be referred to a surgeon and/or oncologist for follow-up.

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## HOW DO I GET SCREENED? WHAT IS THE COST?



Colorectal cancer screening is FREE of cost with most insurance coverage, starting at age 45. Contact your Juniper Health provider today to discuss your screening options and schedule an appointment.

Breathitt County: (606) 666-9950

Lee County: (606) 464-2401

Morgan County: (606) 743-4808

Wolfe County: (606) 668-7385

Elliott County: (606) 738-9785