WHY YOU MIGHT NEED COLON CANCER SCREENING

SCREENING RECOMMENDATIONS*:

- **Every Year**
  - Screening with a fecal occult blood test (FOBT) or fecal immunochemical test (FIT)
- **Every 5 Years**
  - Visual exams including CT colonography and flexible sigmoidoscopy
- **Every 10 Years**
  - Colonoscopy; if polyps are removed, repeat colonoscopy again after 3 years or earlier
- **Stop Screening at Age 75**
  - Patients in good health and have a life expectancy >10 years should screen until age 75

*Recommendations are for those with an average risk of colon cancer (no history of colorectal cancer, polyps, inflammatory bowel disease, family history of colorectal cancer, a suspected or confirmed diagnosis of familial adenomatous polyposis (FAP) or Lynch syndrome, or a past history of radiation to the abdomen or pelvic region for cancer treatment). Patients who do not meet the criteria for having an average risk of colon cancer should refer to their provider for guidance on screening parameters.

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS?

In the early stages of the disease many people do not experience any symptoms, which is why screening is so important! Signs and symptoms can vary, but may include:

- Diarrhea, constipation, thinning stools that lasts for more than a few days, and/or the feeling that you are unable to completely empty the bowel
- Rectal bleeding and/or blood in the stool (bright red spots or dark tar-like stools)
- Abdominal discomfort/pain including cramping, bloating, or gas. You may also have nausea, vomiting, fatigue, and/or unexplained weight loss or loss of appetite.

These signs and symptoms may not be specific to colon cancer, but you should always consult with your doctor if you have any concerns.

ESTIMATES FOR 2021

In the United States, it is estimated that 104,270 people will have a newly diagnosed case of colon cancer in 2021.

According to the American Cancer Society, colon cancer in combination with rectal cancer is the third most deadly type of cancer.

IT’S NEVER TOO LATE TO START SCREENING

Your health is important and should be controlled. Talk with a healthcare provider today about getting screened for colon cancer.

Pharmacy students from NCODA’s Professional Student Organization (PSO) chapters at the following colleges assisted in assembling this cancer screening resource:

1. Belmont University College of Pharmacy
2. University of Minnesota
3. Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine
4. Midwestern University
WHY YOU MIGHT NEED
COLON CANCER
SCREENING

COMMON RISK FACTORS

AGE & RACE
About 90% of colorectal cancer cases occur in people 50+ and African Americans may be at highest risk

HEALTH HISTORY
Diagnosis or family history of colorectal cancer and/or polyps, inflammatory bowel diseases, and type 2 diabetes

DIET & ACTIVITY
Obesity and low levels of physical activity, along with diets with low fiber, high fat, and/or processed meats

LIFESTYLE
Smoking tobacco products and alcohol consumption (>1 drink/day for women and >2 drinks/day for men)

REFERENCES
www.cdc.gov
www.cancer.org
www.cancercenter.com
www.ccalliance.org

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