

Colorectal cancer is a type of cancer that occurs in the colon or rectum. It's the second-leading cause of death from cancer for Americans, behind lung cancer. However, when diagnosed early, **90% of colorectal cancers are completely curable.**

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**About Colon Cancer**

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**Colon Cancer  
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## Top 10 Colon Cancer Prevention Tips

Colon cancer is one of the most common, and yet preventable, cancers. To help protect yourself and loved ones from the disease, follow these ten colon cancer prevention tips.

1. **Go to a doctor if you have any colon cancer symptoms.** Usually, colon cancer doesn't have any symptoms. However, in the later stages, symptoms may include thin stools, cramping, unexplained weight loss, and bloody stools.
2. **If you're 50 or older, schedule a colon cancer screening.** Then actually go to the appointment. Research indicates that by age 50, one in four people has polyps (colon cancer precursors). Getting screened is an excellent colon cancer prevention method.
3. **Eat a balanced diet.** Diets high in fat and cholesterol (especially from animal sources) have been linked to increased colon cancer risk. High-fiber diets, however, have shown a protective effect.
4. **Maintain a healthy weight.** All other things equal, obese men seem to be more at risk for colon cancer than obese women. Also, certain body types seem to influence risk more than others. Studies indicate that extra fat in the waist (an apple shape) increases colon cancer risk more than extra fat in the thighs or hips (a pear shape).
5. **Maintain an active lifestyle.** Research indicates that exercising can reduce colon cancer risk by as much as 40%. Exercise also tends to reduce the incidence of other risk factors for colon cancer, like obesity and diabetes.
6. **Consider genetic counseling.** People who carry genetic mutations are the most likely to develop the disease. If someone in your family has FAP, HNPCC, or if you're of Ashkenazi Jewish descent, please consider genetic counseling.
7. **Learn your family medical history.** A family history of polyps and certain cancers (such as colorectal, stomach, and liver) may increase your risk.
8. **Talk to a doctor about your personal medical history.** Of particular concern are polyps, certain cancers, and chronic inflammation of the bowel.
9. **Don't smoke.** Yes, it's a risk factor for colon cancer too. Smoking increases your colon cancer risk for two main reasons. First, inhaled or swallowed tobacco smoke transports carcinogens to the colon. Second, tobacco use appears to increase polyp size.
10. **Reduce radiation exposure.** According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, colon cancer has been caused by doses of about 1,000 millisieverts.

For more information about colon cancer prevention, causes, symptoms, screening, and treatment, please visit:

<http://coloncancer.about.com>

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