

Starting today . . .

If you are over 40 years old

- Have a digital exam each year

If you are over 50 years old

- Have a digital exam each year
- Get a stool-blood test every year
- Have a "procto" exam every three to five years after two annual exams are normal
- If you have a family member who had colorectal cancer, have these tests more often

If someone in your family had colorectal cancer and you are 30 years old or older

- Have a digital exam each year
- Get your stool checked for blood every year

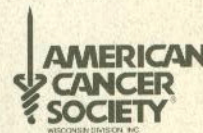
These American Cancer Society guidelines are meant for people who have no colorectal cancer symptoms.

Be especially watchful for signs of colorectal cancer if you are at high risk for this disease. You may be at high risk of getting colorectal cancer if you:

- Have bleeding in the rectum other than from hemorrhoids.
- Have polyps (growths) in the intestines or rectum. Ask your doctor to find out if you have colon polyps. If you do, have them removed regularly because they can become cancerous. It's a quick and easy procedure.
- Have had ulcerative colitis for 10 years or more (the lining of the colon becomes swollen, giving you diarrhea often).
- Have someone in your family who has had colorectal cancer or a history of multiple polyps.

Determine your risk and your personal plan of action with your doctor. Remember, even if you are at high risk, there are actions you can take every day to decrease the chance that colorectal cancer will be a problem for you . . . starting today!

This brochure was produced in cooperation with



For answers to your health-related questions call your doctor, your local public health department, or the American Cancer Society, 1-800-ACS-2345.

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HARVESTING HEALTH

Colon & rectal cancer

Resource ID#: 4816

Harvesting Health: Colon and Rectal Cancer

Colorectal cancer is cancer of the colon or rectum. It's the second leading cause of cancer deaths today. Most victims are men and women over the age of 40. Fortunately, like many cancers today, colorectal cancer is highly preventable and highly curable if caught early. All you have to remember is to eat the right foods, take care of yourself and have annual medical check-ups.



Starting today . . .

Eat the right foods

There are many things you can do each day to reduce your chance of getting colorectal cancer.

- Limit the amount of fat you consume. Eat lean meats, fish and poultry.
- Eat a diet rich in fiber and fruit. Fiber is found in whole grains, cereals, breads, pasta, vegetables and fruits. As a farmer, you might be able to find most of your fiber and fruit right in your own backyard.
- Drink plenty of water.

Farming "low-fat"

Being both a farmer and a person who believes in a low-fat diet makes perfect sense. No one is saying you shouldn't eat what you grow. Meat, eggs, cheese, milk and other products have low-fat varieties. Seek out low-fat meat and cheese, drink skim or one percent milk, and use egg substitutes. All these products are made with the same raw foodstuffs that come from the farm. Eat them along with whole grains, fruits and vegetables, which, of course, come from farms.

Take care of yourself

- Get plenty of exercise. (This one shouldn't be hard for a farmer).
- Pay attention to what your body may be telling you. Colorectal cancer warning signs that may appear include:
 - Rectal pressure or a feeling of incomplete emptying after bowel movements
 - Bleeding that shows up in the stool
 - Change in the appearance of the stool
 - Changes in toilet habits such as diarrhea, constipation or both

These signs can be caused by other things that are not cancer, but to be safe, check with your doctor if you notice any of the symptoms.

Have an annual medical exam

In its early stages, colorectal cancer has no warning signs. The only way you can know you have it is by having a colorectal exam. The cancer can best be treated when found early.

There are three tests doctors use to find colorectal cancer.

- The first is a digital exam, where the doctor inserts a finger into your rectum to feel for growths.
- The second is to test your stool for blood.
- The third is a procto exam, where a flexible tube is inserted into your rectum so the doctor can look for growths or tumors.

All tests are easy, relatively painless and should be part of your yearly visit to the doctor.