

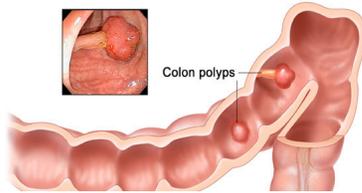
COLONOSCOPY FACT SHEET

Did you know that colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer deaths in Maryland?

What is Colonoscopy?

Colonoscopy is a test where a doctor uses a long, flexible tube with a light to look inside your large intestine (colon or guts). **Colonoscopy looks at the whole colon to find and remove polyps or to find cancer.**

Adenomatous polyps or "adenomas" are small growths that can turn into cancer. A "hyperplastic" polyp is a type of polyp that usually does **not** cause cancer. Removing polyps can **prevent** cancer.



Need Help?

Contact the Cancer Prevention, Education Screening and Treatment Program (CPEST) at the Baltimore City Health Department (410) 396-3718 for:

- ◆ Free colorectal cancer screening for eligible people
- ◆ Information on colorectal cancer and screening

If your insurance covers screening, contact your doctor.

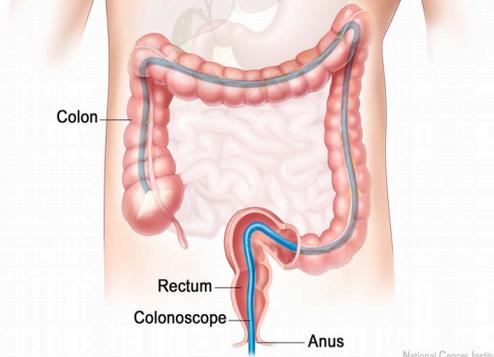
Colonoscopy Can Also Find:

Inflammatory Bowel Disease: this includes Ulcerative Colitis and Crohn's colitis. Inflammatory bowel disease increases the risk of colorectal cancer.

Diverticula: finger-like pouches from the wall of the colon due to weak muscles. They do **not** increase the risk of colorectal cancer.

Hemorrhoids: big veins in and around the anus. Hemorrhoids can cause pain or bleeding. They do **not** increase the risk of colorectal cancer.

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Who Should Get Colorectal Cancer Screening?

- ◆ People ages 50 years and over (over 90% of colorectal cancer is found in people age 50 years and older).
- ◆ People under 50 years:
 - With a personal or family history of colorectal cancer or adenomas;
 - With a personal history of inflammatory bowel disease (ulcerative colitis, Crohn's colitis); or
 - Women who have had cancer of the ovary or endometrium (womb) before age 50 years.

Screening Saves Lives

How is the Test Done?

Before your colonoscopy, your colon must be clean so the doctor can see inside of the entire colon. To do this, you will be asked to take a laxative and go on a clear liquid diet before the test.

Just before the test, you will be given medicine to relax you. After the test, you are sent home, but you will need someone to drive you home. Although this procedure is relatively safe, all medical procedures involve some risk.