

## COLORECTAL CANCER

---

### Background

Colorectal cancer is the second most common cause of cancer death in the United States. It is estimated that 53,010 people died from colorectal cancer in 2024. The rate of people being diagnosed with colorectal cancer has dropped overall since the mid-1980s. However, rates of colorectal cancer cases have been increasing by 1% to 2% a year in people younger than 55 years of age since the mid-1990s. Approximately 90% of colorectal cancers are preventable. Early screening is highly effective at addressing cancerous colorectal polyps.

### CDC Programs Addressing Colorectal Cancer

CDC's Division of Cancer Prevention and Control (DCPC) oversees the Colorectal Cancer Control Program (CRCCP). CRCCP works with clinics, hospitals, and other healthcare organizations to increase colorectal cancer screening in high-need populations for those aged 45 to 75. The program also provides a reminder system that informs both the healthcare professional and patient when it is time for a new colorectal cancer screening, assists in identifying what barriers within their organization discourage patients from seeking new screenings and what practices can eliminate them (e.g., extending clinic hours, simplifying paperwork, offering child care, etc.), and accepts assessments and provides feedback from program administrators on how a recipient's organization's screening levels compare to other organizations.

Additional funding for CRCCP would allow CDC to expand the CRCCP to all 50 states and increase the use of life-saving cancer screening among unscreened adults.

### The Cost of Colorectal Cancer

- Colorectal cancer has the second highest treatment cost of any cancer, accounting for 11.6% of all cancer treatment costs.
- In 2020, national expenditures for medical services related to colorectal cancer were \$23.7 billion.
- On average, Medicare spends \$63,063 a year on colorectal cancer treatment for each patient.

### Colorectal Cancer Prevention

For people who are at average risk, the most effective way to reduce the risk of colorectal cancer is routine screening, beginning at age 45. Colonoscopies (a form of colorectal cancer screening) are associated with as much as a 69% decrease in new cases of colorectal cancer and an 88% decrease in the risk of death from it. Despite strong evidence to support colorectal cancer screening, many adults do not seek screening as recommended.