



Six Ways to Improve Your Colon Health

1.



Get Screened

Screenings are tests that look for cancer before signs and symptoms develop. [Colon screenings](#) can often find growths called polyps that can be removed before they turn into cancer. The American Cancer Society recommends testing starting at age 50 for average risk non-African Americans and 45 for African Americans. If you are not of average risk, or have a family history of colon cancer, talk to your doctor about which screening guideline is appropriate for you.

2.



Eat Lots of Vegetables, Fruits and Whole Grains

Diets that include lots of vegetables, fruits and whole grains can reduce your risk of colon cancer. Reducing or eliminating your intake of red meat and processed meats (such as cold cuts and cured meats like salami) can also reduce your risk of colorectal and other cancers.

3.



Get Regular Exercise

If you are not physically active, you have a greater chance of developing colon cancer. Increasing your activity may help reduce your risk.

4.



Watch Your Weight

Being overweight or obese also increases your risk of both getting and dying from colon cancer.

5.



Don't Smoke

Long-term smokers are more likely than non-smokers to develop and die from colon cancer.

6.



Limit Alcohol

[Colon cancer has been linked to heavy drinking.](#) The American Cancer Society recommends no more than 2 drinks a day for men and 1 drink a day for women.