

# Your Guide to Colon Cancer Screening

Although there are several choices for colon (also called colorectal) cancer screening, UI Health Care experts recommend choosing one of two tools - colonoscopy or yearly Fecal Immunochemical Test (FIT).

When you should start and stop colon cancer screening varies based on your own medical history. In general, regular screening starts around age 50 but your clinician may recommend it begin earlier if you have a family history of cancer. Screening is not generally recommended after age 75, but some people may want to be screened until they are much older. The best thing for you to do is discuss it with your doctor.

Screening refers to tests done in people without symptoms. If you have symptoms such as abdominal pain, changes in your bowel movements, including blood in your stool, you should discuss these with your clinician.

**Below is a side-by-side comparison of the two tests UI experts recommend. Review this information with your doctor and get screened for colon cancer.**

Commonly asked questions	Colonoscopy	FIT
Can I self-refer without a doctor?	Yes.	No, you need to pickup a kit at the doctor's office.
Is there a chance I could have a complications like a tear or bleeding problems?	Less than 1 out of 1,000 people.	No.
What do I need to do to prepare for the test?	There will be bowel cleansing with a prescribed laxative and no solid foods the day before the exam. You may also need to adjust medications.	Pick up test kit from the doctor.
Where is the test performed?	The test is performed in a doctor's office, clinic, or hospital. An intravenous (IV) is placed to give medications to make you drowsy to help decrease pain. You may feel groggy after the procedure and will need to have someone drive you home.	The test is performed at home. A stool sample is collected, placed in the provided plastic container, and mailed back to the University of Iowa lab.
How often is the test required?	Once every 10 years (if results are normal).	Every year.

**i** For more information about colonoscopy and other colon cancer screening options visit [uihc.org/colonoscopy](http://uihc.org/colonoscopy) or call 319-356-4060