

Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

March is [Colorectal Cancer](#) Awareness Month. *Colorectal cancer* is when abnormal cells grow together in the colon to form colon polyps or the rectum to form rectal polyps. These polyps can turn into cancer. It's called colon or rectal cancer depending on where the polyp is located.

Colorectal cancer is the third most common cancer in the U.S.—the second leading cause of cancer-related deaths among men and the third leading cause for women. It occurs mostly in people older than 50. An estimated 60 percent of colorectal cancer deaths could be prevented if people were screened routinely.

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What are the causes of colorectal cancer?

Researchers have found several [factors that can increase a person's risk of colorectal cancer](#), but it's not yet clear exactly how all of these factors might cause this cancer.

What are the main colorectal cancer symptoms?

Symptoms of colorectal cancer are usually not evident until the cancer starts to spread. Symptoms include:

- Blood in stool or very dark stools
- Stools that are narrower than usual
- Change in bowel habits—more frequent or feeling that the bowels are not emptying completely
- Frequent gas pains or cramps
- Diarrhea or constipation

How is colorectal cancer screening done?

[The American Cancer Society](#) recommends regular colorectal cancer screenings for everyone age 50 and older. Doctors can use visual tests, stool-based tests, or both.

What is the treatment for colorectal cancer?

When colorectal cancer is caught early, the survival rate is 90 percent. Colorectal cancer treatment usually includes surgery, chemotherapy, or radiation. Be sure to schedule your annual well visit and have a conversation with your health care provider to review your personal and family history and to identify possible risk factors that might require screening earlier than age 50.

Additional Resources

- [Cigna](#) members
- [Kaiser Permanente](#) members
- [Colorectal Cancer Alliance](#)
- [American Cancer Society](#)
- [American Society of Colon & Rectal Surgeons](#)
- [The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

National Nutrition Month: Webinars Start at 11 AM Today

Whether you need to make the switch to a healthier diet or are looking for more tips to help you maintain healthy choices, register for these upcoming webinars below. Each webinar is geared to help lead you in the right direction to a healthy diet and lifestyle.

- **WEBINAR: Portion Distortion, March 17 at 11 a.m. ([Register](#))**
Do you know how today's portions compare to portions available 20 years ago? Learn what true portion sizes really are, and the amount of physical activity required to burn off the extra calories provided by today's portions.

- **WEBINAR: Jumpstart Your Metabolism, March 24 at Noon** ([Register](#))
How does metabolism work? What can you do to boost it to higher levels and lose weight? Learn tips to increase your metabolism naturally and without the use of supplements.
- **WEBINAR: Supermarket Savvy, March 31 at Noon** ([Register](#))
What goes in your cart goes in your body! What is the relationship of food, diet & health? Learn how to shop smart by reading food labels for healthy food choices & making easy shopping substitutions.

After registering for a webinar, remember to add it to your calendar. And, in order to help you eat well and be well all month long, **Level Up will randomly give away \$25 Panera Bread gift cards weekly** to those who send [Level Up](#) pictures of how they are honoring or celebrating National Nutrition Month!

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