Listen to your gut.

Know the colorectal cancer warning signs



Symptoms do not have an age limit. You do not have to be 45 to ask for an evaluation. Screening is for people without symptoms. [1, 2]

Blood where it should not be

Blood on toilet paper, in the toilet or mixed with stool. Even a small amount deserves a call. [1, 3]

A change in your routine

New diarrhea, constipation or narrower stools that persist beyond a few days. [1]

Still need to go?

Feeling your bowel has not emptied, even after a bowel movement. [1]

Belly pain that lingers

Ongoing or recurring cramps, pain, bloating or abdominal discomfort. [1, 2]

Unusual tiredness

Weakness, ongoing fatigue or unexplained iron-deficiency anemia (low iron/red blood cells). [1]

Weight loss without trying

Losing weight without a change in diet or activity that explains it. [1, 2]

These signs often have other causes. They still need medical attention. Do not assume bleeding is hemorrhoids or wait for several symptoms to appear. [1]

When to get help

Contact your healthcare provider promptly about these signs, including small amounts of blood. [1, 3]
Go to the ER now: heavy bleeding, black/tarry stool, or severe belly pain with vomiting and inability to pass gas or stool. **Call 911** for fainting, trouble breathing or signs of shock. [3, 4]

Speak up: "This is a change for me. What tests do I need, and when should I follow up?" A negative screening test does not explain ongoing symptoms. [1, 2]

SOURCES | Click to learn more

1. American Cancer Society: signs & symptoms
2. CDC: talking with your doctor
3. MedlinePlus: gastrointestinal bleeding
4. MedlinePlus: intestinal obstruction

Education, not a diagnosis. Sources checked Nov. 11, 2026. No symptoms? Stay on your screening schedule.