Small steps. Healthier you.

Colorectal cancer prevention & healthy habits



Lower risk, not a guarantee. Healthy habits can reduce risk, but anyone can develop colorectal cancer. A diagnosis is never someone's fault. [1, 2]

Stay on your screening plan

Most average-risk adults start at 45. Family or personal history may mean earlier testing. Removing precancerous polyps can prevent cancer. [3]

Put more plants on your plate

Choose vegetables, whole fruit, beans and whole grains. Try oats, brown rice or a colorful veggie side. Choose water over sugary drinks. [2]

Give your protein a refresh

Limit red meat, such as beef and pork. Eat little, if any, processed meat, such as bacon, hot dogs and deli meat. Try beans, fish or poultry. [1, 2]

Move more. Sit less.

Adults: aim for 150-300 minutes of moderate activity weekly, or 75-150 vigorous minutes. Start small, build gradually and break up sitting. [2]

Skip tobacco & alcohol

If you smoke, ask for help quitting. For cancer prevention, it is best not to drink alcohol. Try a sparkling-water toast or an alcohol-free outing. [1, 2]

Care for your whole self

Work toward a healthy weight with support from your care team. Focus on sustainable habits, nourishment and movement that fits your abilities. [1, 2]

Make it doable: A 10-minute walk, one plant-based meal or scheduling a screening conversation is a great place to start. Choose one small step this week.

A personalized plan matters

No shortcut replaces screening. Do not start aspirin or supplements just to prevent colorectal cancer without medical advice. [1, 2]
In treatment, after surgery or living with an ostomy? Ask your care team or dietitian to adapt food, fiber, activity and weight goals to your needs. These general tips do not replace your cancer care plan.

Symptoms? Do not wait for screening. Blood in stool, persistent bowel changes, unexplained weight loss or ongoing belly pain need medical evaluation at any age. [4]

SOURCES | Click to learn more

1. ACS: colorectal cancer prevention
2. ACS: diet & physical activity guideline
3. ACS: colorectal screening guideline
4. CDC: colorectal cancer symptoms

General adult education, not individual medical advice. Sources checked November 11, 2026.