



# FAST FACTS

*A message for health care providers*



## Colorectal Cancer Screening

### HEDIS measurements for colorectal cancer screening:

- Patients ages 50-75 years should have one of the following screenings:
  - colonoscopy every 10 years,
  - flexible sigmoidoscopy every 5 years,
  - fecal occult blood test yearly
  - Exclusions: colorectal cancer diagnosis or total colectomy.

Note: People at higher risk of developing colorectal cancer should begin screening at a younger age, and may need to be tested more frequently. The decision to be screened after age 75 should be made on an individual basis. For more information, please refer to the current colorectal cancer screening guidelines from the USPSTF at [www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/uspstf/uspscolo.htm](http://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/uspstf/uspscolo.htm).

### Colorectal cancer statistics:

- Colorectal cancer (cancer of the colon and rectum) is one of the most common cancers among New Yorkers.
- Nationally, excluding skin cancers, colorectal cancer is the third most common cancer and the third leading cause of cancer deaths in men and women. In New York, about 5,200 men and 5,400 women develop cancer of the colon and rectum each year. About 1,800 men and 1,900 women die from this disease annually in New York State. It is estimated that one in 18 people will develop colorectal cancer sometime during their life.

### Things you can do to increase colorectal cancer screening rates in your practice:

- Prior to the procedure, take time to clearly explain to your patients the bowel prep process, address their concerns about discomfort and stress the importance of undergoing screening. You may want to suggest that the patient put the prep in the fridge, drink it with a straw or choose a prep that comes in different flavourings to make it more palatable.
- Explain the varying modalities for colorectal cancer screening.
- Understand patients' concerns. A study on low completion rates for screening, conducted at the University of Colorado, Denver, found that females were more likely to not show up for their colonoscopies, and those patients generally expressed fear or embarrassment as the reason. Some female patients may prefer that a female practitioner perform the test.
- Uninsured or underinsured patients may qualify for free screening through the Cancer Services Programs of Western New York (CSPWNY.) Call (716) 886-9201 for more information.

### Resources

- Cancer Services Programs of Western New York (CSPWNY) <http://www.cspwny.org/>
- CDC [www.cdc.gov/cancer/colorectal/basic\\_info/screening/](http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/colorectal/basic_info/screening/)
- NCI <http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/screening/colon-and-rectal>