

FACTS ABOUT COLORECTAL CANCER: **Precautions You Can Take**

As we all know, the best way to stay well is to live a healthy lifestyle. A few simple precautions now can help significantly improve your chances of avoiding colorectal cancer altogether:

Eat right for life

- Eat lots of fruits and vegetables
- Keep your fat intake to less than 30% of your total calories
- Avoid foods high in cholesterol
- Limit alcohol intake

Watch your weight

Studies show that maintaining a healthful body weight decreases cancer risk.

Quit smoking!

In addition to a host of other potentially fatal side effects, smoking raises your risk of colon cancer.

Start getting screened when you turn 50!

The most important precaution you can take is to get screened. Screenings can find polyps before they become cancer and colorectal cancer is 90% treatable when detected early.

Unfortunately, the most common symptom of colorectal cancer is no symptom at all. However, the following symptoms MAY indicate a problem: a change in bowel habits, diarrhea, constipation or vomiting, narrower than normal stools, unexplained weight loss, constant tiredness, blood in the stool, abdominal discomfort, a feeling that the bowel does not empty completely, or unexplained anemia. If you experience any of these symptoms for more than a few days, talk to your doctor about colorectal cancer screening.



An Initiative of the
Maine Comprehensive Cancer Control Program
Maine Department of Health and Human Services
Bureau of Health

For more information about colorectal cancer,
call **1-877-320-6800**

TTY: 1-800-438-5514 (Deaf/Hard of Hearing)

or visit www.mainepublichealth.gov.



John Elias Baldacci
Governor

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