

SCREENING & EARLY DETECTION



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SCREENING COLORECTAL CANCER

Colorectal Cancer

Colorectal cancer starts in the cells of the colon or the rectum, which make up the large intestine or large bowel. It is also referred to as colon, rectal or bowel cancer. Colorectal cancer is **the third most commonly diagnosed cancer in Canada** (excluding non-melanoma skin cancers). It is the second leading cause of death from cancer in men and the third leading cause of death from cancer in women in Canada.



What You Can Do

Screening tests help find colorectal cancer before any symptoms develop. When colorectal cancer is found and treated early, the chances of successful treatment are better. Screening consists of stool tests, to check for bleeding inside the digestive organs.

Some people have a higher risk of colorectal cancer. People at higher risk may need to be tested more often and at an earlier age than people with average risk. Women and men ages 50-74 should get screened regularly for colon cancer, by having a stool test every 2 years. If you are 75 or older, talk to your doctor about whether a stool test is right for you.

Colorectal cancer may not cause any signs or symptoms in its early stages because the cancer is very small. Symptoms often appear once a tumour grows into surrounding tissues and organs. Other health conditions can cause the same symptoms as colorectal cancer. See your doctor if you have these signs or symptoms mentioned below.

Did you know?

It is estimated that about 1 in 14 Canadian men and 1 in 18 Canadian women will develop colorectal cancer during their lifetime.

WHAT TO WATCH FOR

- Diarrhea
- Change in bowel habits
- Constipation
- Blood in stool (either bright red, very dark, black or tarry looking)
- General abdominal discomfort (frequent gas pains, bloating, etc)
- A blockage in the intestine (called a bowel obstruction)
- Fatigue and weakness
- A lump in the abdomen or rectum
- Pain in the abdomen, back, buttocks or leg
- Stool that looks narrower than usual



SCREENING CERVICAL CANCER

Cervical Cancer

Cervical cancer starts in the cells of the cervix. Infection with the human papillomavirus (HPV) is the main risk factor for cervical cancer, but it does not always cause the disease by itself. Other risk factors include sexual activity, smoking, giving birth many times, HIV infection, history of sexual transmitted infections, oral contraceptives and Diethylstilbestrol (a form of estrogen).



What You Can Do

Screening tests help find cervical cancer before any symptoms develop. When cervical cancer is found and treated early, the chances of successful treatment are better. If you've ever been sexually active, you should start having regular Pap tests by the time you're 21 years old. A Pap test is a procedure in which cells are scraped from the cervix and examined under a microscope. You'll need a Pap test every 1 to 3 years, depending on your previous test results.

Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Vaccine

There are three vaccines available in Canada. The vaccines prevent infection in women who have not already been exposed to the HPV types that the vaccines cover. It is available for females between the ages of 9 and 45 and males between the age of 9 and 26. The vaccines are most effective if they are given before a person becomes sexually active. It's important to know that the HPV vaccines do not replace screening. Regular pap tests are still required.

Did you know?

In Canada, about one-third of HPV-related cancers occur in males. Some vaccines are also available for boys.

WHAT TO WATCH FOR

- Unusually long or heavy periods
- Pain in the pelvic area or lower back that may go down one or both legs
- Abnormal or increased amount of vaginal discharge
- Difficulty urinating
- Foul-smelling vaginal discharge
- Difficulty having a bowel movement
- Abnormal vaginal bleeding including between periods, after menopause and after sexual intercourse
- Leaking of urine or feces from the vagina
- Pain during sexual intercourse

**IF SOMETHING DOESN'T FEEL
NORMAL, TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR!**



SCREENING BREAST CANCER

Breast Cancer

Breast cancer is the most common cancer to affect Canadian women: one in eight women will develop the disease in their lifetime. Men can get breast cancer too, but it is very rare.

Early detection is key to finding cancer cells (or pre-cancerous conditions) often before any symptoms start to show. This increases the chances of successful treatment and survival.



What You Can Do

Mammograms are the best tool for early detection. The Screening Mammography Program in BC provides free screening mammograms for eligible BC women age 40 and up.

Talk to your doctor. All women should talk to their doctor about their individual risk of developing breast cancer, especially if they have had immediate relatives with breast cancer, or have had breast enhancements such as implants or injections. Your doctor can assess your risks and discuss risk-reduction strategies with you and answer any questions you may have about the benefits and risks of mammography.

Know your breasts. Many women discover their own breast cancer by noticing changes in the look or feel of their breasts. In fact, becoming familiar with your breasts – no matter what your age – is one of the most important things you can do to maintain your breast health.

Did you know?

The current data show that only 60% of BC women aged 50–69 have regular mammograms

WHAT TO WATCH FOR

- A lump or swelling in the breast or armpit
- A change in breast size or shape
- Dimpling, puckering, or thickening of the skin
- Itching of the breast or nipple
- Unusual breast tenderness or pain
- Redness, swelling, or increased warmth in the breast
- A nipple turning inwards
- Discharge from the nipple
- Crusting, scaling or ulcers on the nipple

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NORMAL, TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR!**



SCREENING PROSTATE CANCER

Prostate Cancer

Prostate cancer starts in the cells of the prostate gland. It usually grows slowly and can often be managed or cured. Prostate cancer can be detected early using a blood test and/or a digital rectal exam. If you are 50 or older, you should talk to your doctor about prostate cancer, including your risk, signs or symptoms, and the pros and cons of being tested.

What You Can Do

Men who will soon be 50 should be informed about the benefits and limitations of testing for prostate cancer. Your doctor is the best person to answer your questions and help you to decide what is best for you. If you are at a higher risk for getting prostate cancer because of your family history or African ancestry discuss the possibility of being tested from an earlier age.

Two tests may be used for the early detection of prostate cancer:

- **Digital rectal exam (DRE):**
a physical exam of the prostate through the rectum.
The doctor inserts a gloved finger into the rectum to feel the prostate for lumps or anything else that seems unusual.
- **Prostate-specific antigen (PSA) test:** a blood test that measures prostate-specific antigen, a substance made by the prostate.

Did you know?

Prostate cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer for Canadian men..

WHAT TO WATCH FOR

- More frequent urination, especially at night
- A strong or sudden urge to urinate
- Trouble starting the flow of urine and straining to urinate
- Difficulty starting the urine stream (straining)
- Blood in the urine or semen

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR DOCTOR

- What's my risk of prostate cancer?
- What tests should I have, if any?
- What are the pros and cons of having the tests?
- How often should I be tested?

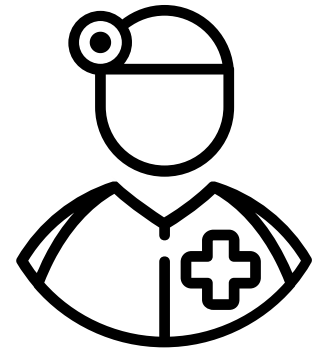


EARLY DETECTION TESTICULAR CANCER

Testicular Cancer

Testicular cancer starts in the cells of the testicle. A cancerous tumour is a group of cancer cells that can grow into nearby tissue and destroy it. The tumour can also spread to other parts of the body.

Testicular cancer is the most common cancer in men 15–29 years of age. Known risk factors for testicular cancer are undescended testicle, family or personal history of testicular cancer, calcium deposits in the testicle and tall adult height.



What You Can Do

All men should know what is normal for their testicles. Many men discover testicular cancer by noticing changes in their testicles. The best time to feel the testicles is just after a warm bath or shower. The heat from the water makes the testicles descend and the scrotum relax, which makes it easier to feel anything that is abnormal. Carefully feel each testicle for any changes, such as a lump or any tenderness. At the back of each testicle there is a tube (called the epididymis) that collects and carries sperm. It is normal to feel this tube as a soft cord or a small bump. It is also normal for one testicle to be larger than the other.

Comparing the two sides for differences may be helpful. If you find a change, report it to a doctor as soon as possible. The doctor may order tests to find out what the change could mean.

Did you know?

The number of men diagnosed with testicular cancer is low before puberty, increases significantly after age 14, peaks around age 30 and then declines by age 60.

WHAT TO WATCH FOR

- Painless lump in the testicle
- Pain or dull ache in the testicle or scrotum
- Swelling so the testicle is larger than usual
- Buildup of fluid in the scrotum
- Feeling of heaviness in the scrotum or abdomen
- Enlarged lymph nodes in the neck

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NORMAL, TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR**