

COLORECTAL CANCER Prevention

Colorectal cancer is highly preventable with screening that can detect and remove polyps before they become cancerous. Follow the recommended screening guidelines and lower your risk for colorectal cancer by changing the risk factors you can control.

Diet

Adding fiber-rich foods, including fruits, vegetables, and whole-grains can promote colon health and lower cancer risk. Diets high in red and processed meat have been linked to increased colorectal cancer risk.



Smoking

Smoking is linked to increased risk for most cancers. Avoid starting smoking, or consider quitting.



Alcohol Use

Moderation is key. Aim to stay within recommended limits or avoid alcohol to reduce your cancer risk.



Physical Activity

Physical activity can help regulate some hormones that contribute to the development of cancer and help keep the immune system healthy. Exercise can also help you stay at a healthy weight.



Prevention Resources

The [Physical Activity and Nutrition](#) program at the Vermont Department of Health works to make healthy foods and opportunities for physical activity more accessible to all Vermonters.

[ACS CancerRisk360™](#) is an educational resource that empowers individuals with information to support overall health and understand factors that may reduce the risk of cancer.

[802Quits](#) provides free help to quit smoking, vaping, or any other tobacco or nicotine product use, including personalized quit plans.

Colorectal cancer is highly preventable with regular screening!
Screening begins at **age 45** for average-risk people.



Source: American Cancer Society, 2025