



What is colorectal cancer?

Cancer that forms in tissues of the colon and rectum, the lowest parts of the digestive system. It is usually a slow-growing cancer that may not have symptoms.

Is it common?

In 2008, combining colon cancers and rectal cancers, an estimated 148,810 new cases were diagnosed and 49,960 deaths occurred in the U.S.

What causes it?

While the cause of colorectal cancers is not known, most begin as a type of polyp, called an adenoma, that can become cancerous. Removing the polyp early may prevent it from becoming cancer.

The facts about colorectal cancer

What are the symptoms?

Although you may feel healthy, abnormal changes can appear without symptoms. Possible symptoms include a change in bowel habits, rectal bleeding or dark stools, cramping or stomach pain, and weakness or tiredness.

How is it detected?

Tests that can find both colorectal polyps and cancer include flexible sigmoidoscopy and colonoscopy. Blood and imaging tests may also be ordered to detect colorectal cancer.

How is colorectal cancer treated?

Surgery, radiation, chemotherapy and monoclonal antibodies can be used. Five-year survival rates are 72-93% for early-stage cancer, and approximately 8% for late-stage cancer that has spread to other areas.

How can I prevent colorectal cancer?

Regular colorectal cancer screenings are the best way to find and remove polyps before they become cancerous, or to find cancers early when they're easier to cure. Ask your health care practitioner for screening advice.

Source: www.cancer.org

For more information about colorectal cancer, talk to your health care practitioner.



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