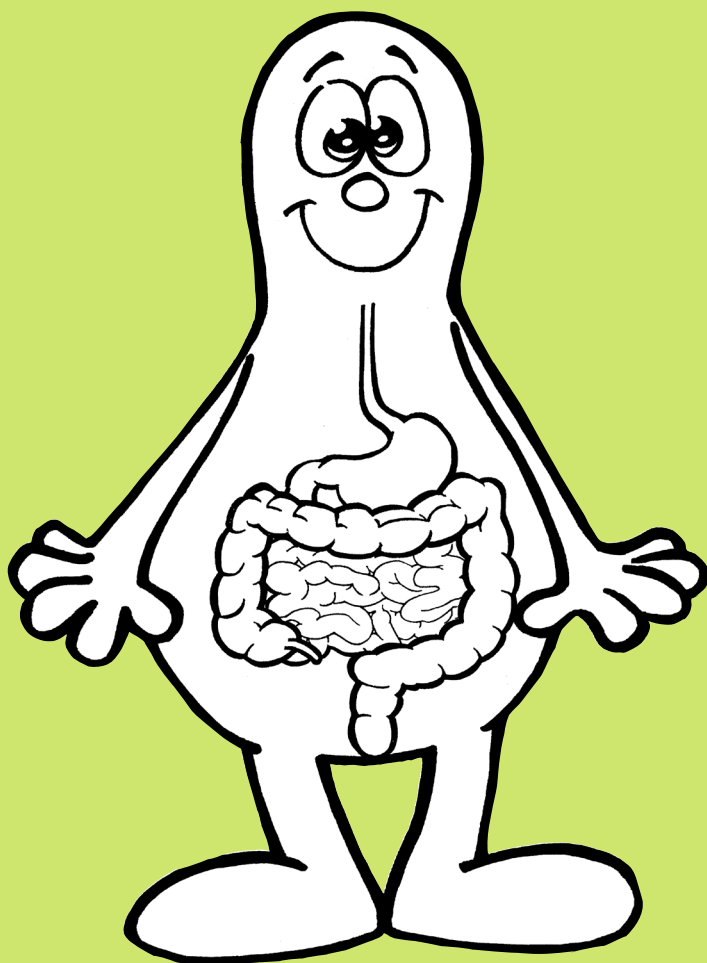
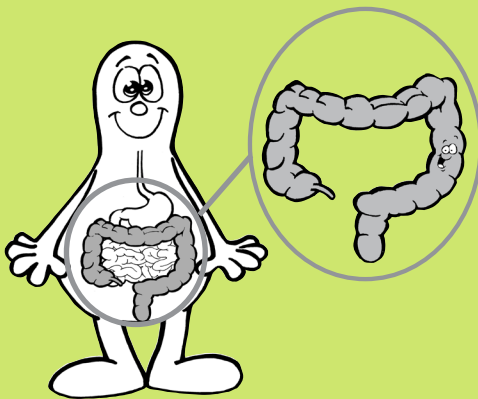


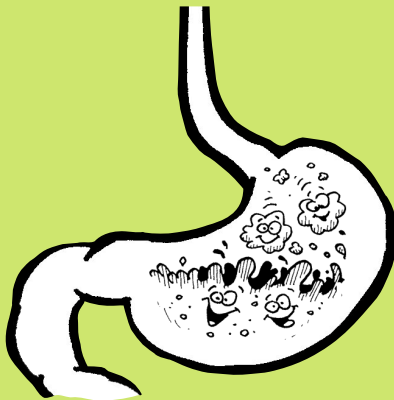
# **YOUR COLON, PREVENTING CANCER AND KEEPING YOU HEALTHY**





The colon is a long tube-like muscle. It starts on the lower right side of your belly, then runs across your belly to the lower left side of your body.

Another name for the colon is the large intestine.



The food you eat is broken down in an area of the belly called the stomach.

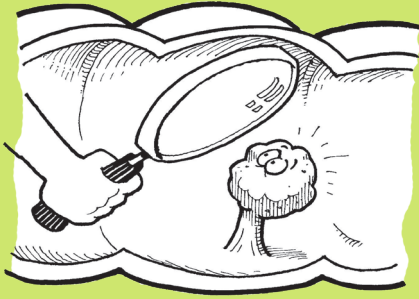
It becomes a thick liquid. From here, it moves into the small intestine.



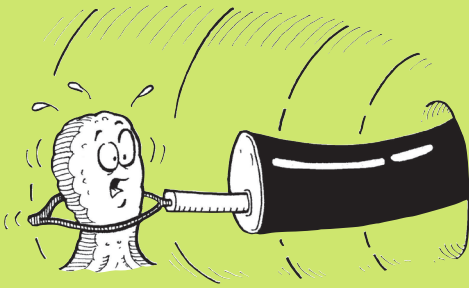
From the small intestine, the liquid moves into the large intestine.

The large intestine is also called the colon.

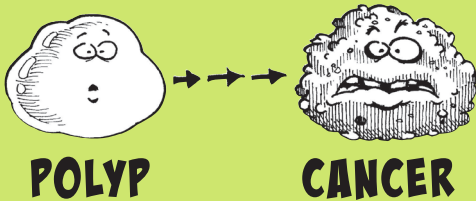
Inside your colon, the liquid becomes poop.



Your colon needs to be screened for cancer because sometimes your colon has changes, called polyps.



Doctors can help find and remove polyps. This is called a screening.



Polyps are not usually dangerous, but they can turn into cancer over time.

Most of the time you can't feel polyps in your colon and you might not know they are there.



These changes are most likely to happen after age 45.

You should have a colon screening starting at age 45.

Talk to your doctor about when you should have your screening.

## SCREENING TESTS FOR COLON CANCER

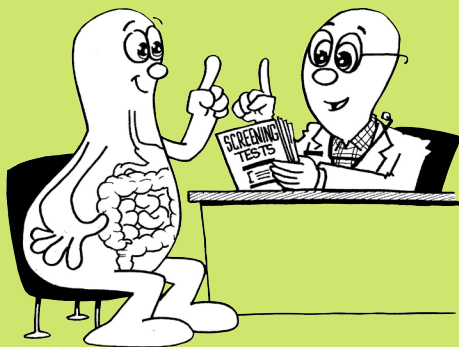


Some tests can be done at home and need to be done every year.

## COLONOSCOPY

Some tests, like a colonoscopy, are done in a doctor's office or medical clinic.

This test is usually done every 5-10 years.



Ask your doctor about the different types of tests and the one that's right for you.

You might not have signs or symptoms of colon cancer, which makes talking to your doctor about getting tested very important.

## SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF COLON CANCER

Sometimes if you have polyps, you may have changes in your body called signs or symptoms.

If you have any of the following changes that last for more than a week, talk to your doctor.

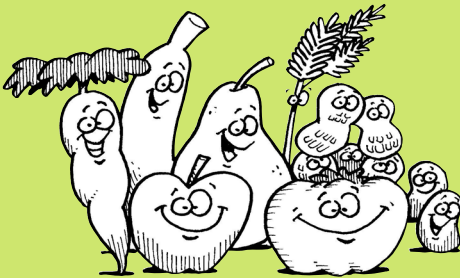


These may be signs of colon cancer.

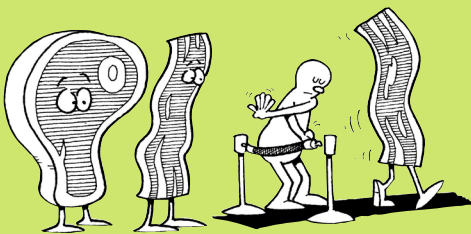
- Change in how often you poop
- Trouble pooping
- Poop looks different
- Losing weight without trying
- Blood in poop
- Belly is enlarged or painful
- Feeling full (even after pooping)

# PREVENTION

You can help lower your risk of getting colon cancer.



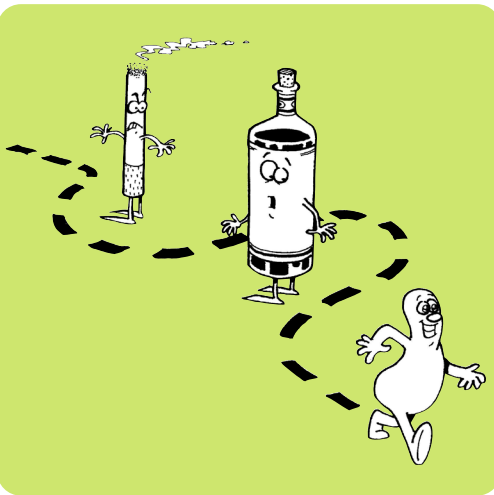
Eat lots of vegetables, fruits, whole grains and beans.



Limit red meat and processed meats, like bacon and cold cuts.

Keep a healthy weight.

Exercise regularly.

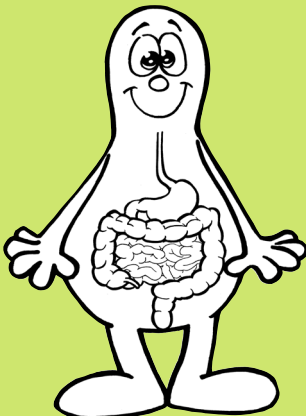


**Avoid tobacco products and limit alcohol use.**

**For more information about how to quit smoking, call 1-800-QUITNOW.**



**Talk with your doctor about being screened for colon cancer today!**



**Watch the video at:**  
<https://vimeo.com/435872253>.

**Watch previous videos at:**  
<https://idph.iowa.gov/igs>.



**(515) 281-5616**

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