Here's Why You Should Schedule Your Colorectal Cancer Screening

Colorectal cancer is the third leading cause of cancer-related deaths in men and in women in the United States. Screening rates are lower and mortality rates are higher for Louisianans than national averages. Incidence and mortality rates are higher for Black Louisianans than white residents. The Louisiana Department of Health aims to increase colorectal screenings by 2 percentage points in 2022.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who Should Get Screened?</th>
<th>Cases per 100,000</th>
<th>Mortality</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Everyone between the ages of 45 and 75 should get a colorectal cancer screening.</td>
<td>44.9 (In Louisiana) 38.1 (In the United States)</td>
<td>16.4 (In Louisiana) 13.7 (In the United States)</td>
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Early Screening Saves Lives

- ✅ If you do not have a family history of colorectal cancer, you are not at risk and do not need to be screened.
- ❌ Screenings are only for those with symptoms.
- ❌ It's too expensive.
- ✅ Major groups like the American Cancer Society say screening should happen for anyone at average risk between the ages of 45 and 75.
- ✅ Colon cancer is typically asymptomatic until it reaches the later stages, so get screened regardless of symptoms.
- ✅ Health insurance, including Medicaid, covers most screening-associated costs.

What Tests are Available?

- **COLONOSCOPY:** Views the entire colon
- **HIGHLY SENSITIVE STOOL-BASED TESTS:** Can be taken yearly at home
- **STOOL DNA TEST:** Every three years, in the privacy of your home
- **FLEXIBLE SIGMOIDOSCOPY:** Every 5 years; does not require sedation; only looks at the lower part of the colon

Significant Racial Disparities

Black Louisianans have a higher incidence and are more likely to die of colorectal cancer than white residents. The mortality rate for colorectal cancer among Black residents in 2012-16 was 21 deaths per 100,000 compared to 14.8 per 100,000 among white residents.

Resources

- American Cancer Society: [cancer.org/cancer/colon-rectal-cancer.html](http://cancer.org/cancer/colon-rectal-cancer.html) or 800-227-2345
- Mary Bird Perkins Cancer Center: [https://marybird.org/get-screened](https://marybird.org/get-screened)