



# Preventive vs Diagnostic Services Fact Sheet

As you plan your screening, it is important to understand the difference between preventive tests and diagnostic tests. Your insurance coverage may be different depending on how the test is classified.

The American Cancer Society found convincing evidence that screening for colorectal cancer in adults aged 45 to 75 years reduces colorectal cancer mortality.<sup>1</sup>

## Preventive Screening vs Diagnostic Testing Understanding the Difference and Its Impact on Coverage



### Preventive Screening

A test (eg, fecal occult blood test, fecal immunochemical test, sigmoidoscopy, or colonoscopy) is performed on a patient who does not have symptoms but who is in a group at risk for colon cancer, such as<sup>2</sup>:

- Between the ages of 45 and 75<sup>1</sup>
- Has a family history of colon cancer<sup>1</sup>

With few exceptions, healthcare plans cover screenings with no out-of-pocket cost to you.<sup>3</sup>



### Diagnostic Testing

A colonoscopy is used to diagnose a health condition in response to certain symptoms, such as<sup>3</sup>:

- Bleeding or irregularity
- Positive result of a preventive screening

You may have to pay a co-pay, coinsurance, or deductible.<sup>3</sup>

**Talk to your healthcare provider and insurance company today.** Learn what screening is right for you, what services are covered under your plan, and what your cost may be. Then, schedule your colon cancer screening.

To learn more about colorectal cancer and screening, visit

[www.LoveYourColon.org](http://www.LoveYourColon.org)

**References:** **1.** Wolf AM, Fontham ET, Church TR, et al. Colorectal cancer screening for average-risk adults: 2018 guideline update from the American Cancer Society. *CA Cancer J Clin.* 2018;68(4):250-281. **2.** Screening for colorectal cancer: US Preventive Services Task Force Recommendation Statement. *JAMA.* 2016;315(23):2564-2575. **3.** Insurance coverage for colorectal cancer screening. American Cancer Society website. <https://www.cancer.org/cancer/colon-rectal-cancer/detection-diagnosis-staging/screening-coverage-laws.html>. Accessed February 25, 2019.