

## Colon Cancer Screening Options

Test	Pros	Cons
<p><b>Colonoscopy</b>  <b>Cost:</b> Expensive, but covered by most insurance  <b>Frequency:</b> Every 10 years, or as determined by your physician</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ surgeon can view entire colon</li> <li>+ polyps can be removed and biopsied during procedure</li> <li>+ can diagnose other diseases</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– requires special pre-test diet and bowel preparation</li> <li>– sedation means you may miss a day of work</li> </ul>
<p><b>Stool DNA test</b>  <b>Cost:</b> about \$700; may be covered by Medicare; may be covered by some other insurance programs  <b>Frequency:</b> Once every three years</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ sampling performed at home</li> <li>+ no diet restrictions before test</li> <li>+ non-invasive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– if abnormal, will require a colonoscopy</li> <li>– can produce false positive</li> <li>– can miss polyps</li> </ul>
<p><b>Fecal immuno-chemical test (FIT)</b>  <b>Cost:</b> Relatively inexpensive  <b>Frequency:</b> once a year; a flexible sigmoidoscopy procedure should also be performed once every five years</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ sampling performed at home</li> <li>+ no diet restrictions before test</li> <li>+ non-invasive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– if abnormal, will require a colonoscopy</li> <li>– can produce false positive</li> <li>– can miss polyps</li> </ul>
<p><b>Guaiac-based fecal occult blood test (gFOBT)</b>  <b>Cost:</b> Inexpensive  <b>Frequency:</b> once a year; a flexible sigmoidoscopy procedure should also be performed once every five years</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ sampling performed at home</li> <li>+ non-invasive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– requires special pre-test diet and possible medication changes</li> <li>– if abnormal, will require a colonoscopy</li> <li>– can produce false positive</li> <li>– can miss polyps</li> </ul>