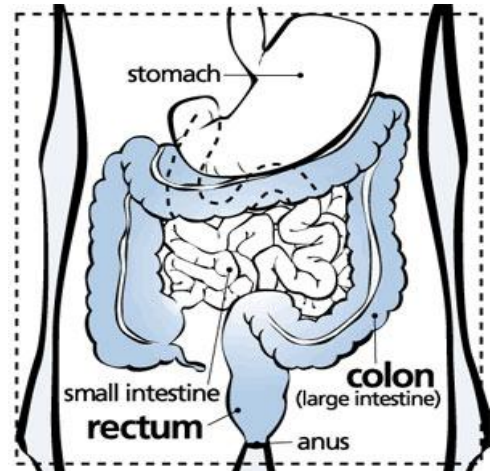


Pacific Islanders & Colorectal Cancer

Colorectal Cancer is Very Common among Pacific Islanders

Understanding Colorectal Cancer

- **Colon:** First 4-5 feet of intestine
- **Rectum:** Last few inches of intestine
- **Cancer:** Uncontrolled cell growth
- **Colorectal Cancer:** Cancer that starts in colon or rectum
 - **Benign tumors:** NOT cancer
 - **Malignant tumors:** are cancer



Risk Factors

- Age
- Colorectal Polyps
- Family History of Colorectal Cancer
- Personal History of Cancer
- Differences in Genetic Makeup
- Irritation or Inflammation of Lining of Colon or Rectum
- Diet high in Animal Fat
- Cigarette Smoking

Symptoms

- Diarrhea or Constipation
- Finding Blood (bright red or very dark/black) in Your Stool
- Finding Your Stools are Narrower than Usual
- Regular Gas Pains or Cramps, or Feeling Full or Bloating
- Losing Weight with No Known Reason
- Feeling Very Tired All the Time
- Having Nausea or Vomiting
- NO SYMPTOMS AT ALL

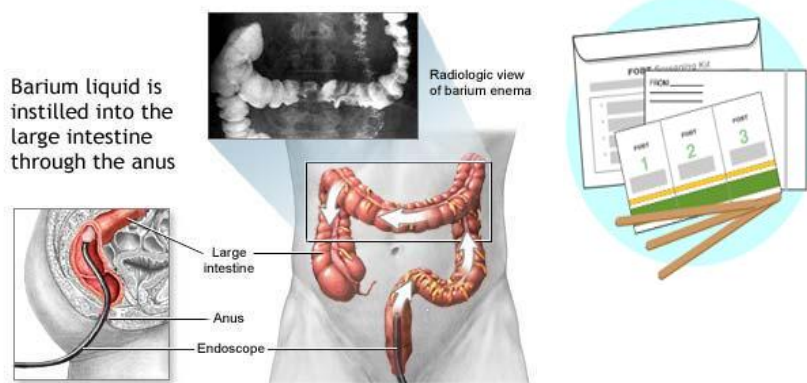
Prevention

Some studies suggest people may reduce their risk of developing colorectal cancer by:

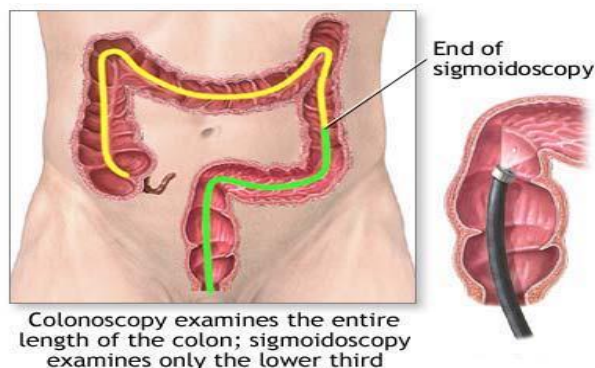
- Increasing Physical Activity
- Eating Fruits & Vegetables (breadfruit, taro, cabbage, mango, papaya)
- Limiting Alcohol Consumption
- Avoiding Tobacco/Cigarette Smoking

Screening Tests

- **Fecal Occult Blood Test (FOBT): Annually, starting at age 50.** A test to check for hidden blood in the stool. Patient puts small piece of stool on a test card & returns to doctor for analysis
- **Double-Contrast Barium Enema: Every 5 years, starting at age 50.** An x-ray of the colon



- **Sigmoidoscopy: Every 5 years, starting at age 50.** A method of looking at part of the colon
- **Colonoscopy: Every 10 years, starting at age 50.** A method of looking at the entire colon



Ask Your Doctor

You may want to ask your doctor the following questions about screening:

- Which tests are recommended for me? Why?
- How much do the tests cost? Will my health insurance plan help pay for screening tests?
- Are the tests painful?
- How soon after the tests will I learn the results?

Other Resources

- National Cancer Institute Helpline: www.cancer.gov/help or 1-800-4-CANCER
- National Cancer Institute: Colorectal Cancer Information www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/types/colon-and-rectal
- National Cancer Institute: "Cancer Risk: Understanding the Puzzle" <http://understandingrisk.cancer.gov/>
- American Cancer Society www.cancer.org or 1-800-ACS-2345

