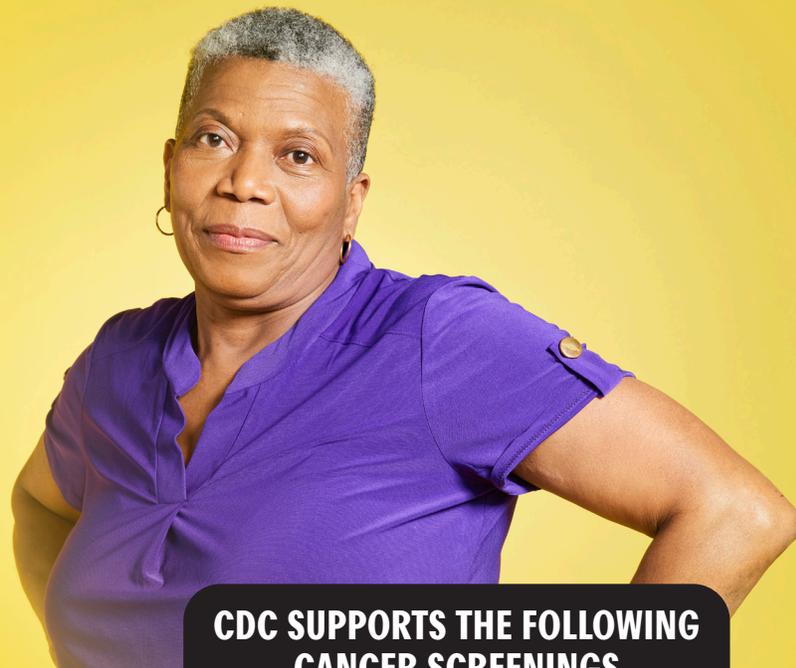


# CANCER DOESN'T WAIT AND NEITHER SHOULD YOU

## YOUR GUIDE TO CANCER SCREENINGS

Cancer screening saves lives. We're here to help with our step-by-step guide to cancer screenings.



### CDC SUPPORTS THE FOLLOWING CANCER SCREENINGS

#### BREAST CANCER

At what age should you get screened?

**Women ages 40–49**

Talk to your healthcare provider about when to start getting screened.

**Women ages 50–74**

Every two years

#### CERVICAL CANCER

At what age should you get screened?

Applies to women with normal findings

**Women ages 21–29**

Pap test (smear) every three years

**Women ages 30–65**

Pap test (smear) and an HPV test every five years

#### COLORECTAL CANCER

At what age should you get screened?

**Women & men ages 45–75**

Frequency depends on type of test

#### LUNG CANCER

At what age should you get screened?

**Women & men ages 50–80 who are heavy smokers or a past smoker who quit within the last 15 years**

Every year

### WHAT IS A CANCER SCREENING?

It is a test that checks your body for cancer before you have symptoms. This testing can help find cancer early when it may be easier to treat or cure. By the time you get symptoms the cancer may have grown and spread, making it harder to treat. When your doctor suggests you have a screening test done, it does not mean that they think you have cancer. Some screenings help in both finding cancer early and preventing cancer.

Cancer screening as described here does not apply to people with risk factors that may cause cancer to develop earlier than the screening ages supported by CDC.

### WHICH TYPES OF CANCER DOES CDC SUPPORT A SCREENING TEST?

CDC supports screening for breast, cervical, colorectal (colon), and lung cancers.

#### BREAST CANCER

Breast cancer is a disease where cells in the breast grow out of control. A mammogram is an x-ray to look at your breasts and make sure your breasts look normal. Mammograms are the best way to find breast cancer early, when it is easier to treat and before it is big enough to feel or cause symptoms.

#### CERVICAL CANCER

Cervical cancer is a type of cancer that occurs in the cells of the cervix — the lower part of the uterus that connects to the vagina. Two screening tests can help prevent cervical cancer or find it early: Pap test (or Pap Smear) and HPV test.

#### COLORECTAL (COLON) CANCER

Colorectal cancer, sometimes called colon cancer, almost always develops from precancerous polyps (abnormal growths) in the colon or rectum that can be removed before they turn into cancer. Screening tests also can find colorectal cancer early when treatment works best.

There are a few different tests used to find polyps or colorectal cancer: colonoscopy, flexible sigmoidoscopy, CT colonoscopy, or stool tests. If you have a stool test first and it is abnormal, a colonoscopy is needed as follow up. There is no single “best test” for any person. Each test has advantages and disadvantages. Talk to your healthcare team about the pros and cons of each test and how often you should be tested.

## LUNG CANCER

Lung cancer begins in the lungs and may spread to lymph nodes or other organs in the body. The only recommended test to find lung cancer early is low-dose computed tomography (also called a low-dose CT scan, or LDCT). This test is designed to catch anything that looks different as early as possible. The main risk factor for getting lung cancer is smoking tobacco. See the chart to see if you should be screened for lung cancer.

## HOW DO I PAY FOR MY RECOMMENDED CANCER SCREENINGS?

Most health insurance plans including Medicare cover all or a portion of the costs for tests that screen for breast, cervical, colorectal, and lung cancers.

Check with your insurance plan to find out what benefits are covered for cancer screenings. For more information about Medicare coverage, visit [www.medicare.gov/external](http://www.medicare.gov/external) or call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users should call 1 (877) 486-2048.

If you have limited or no insurance, it's important to understand how to find financial assistance if you need it:

- Medicaid benefits are different based on the state in which you live. Check with your state to find out what benefits are available to you. A list of mandatory and optional Medicaid benefits can be found [here](#).
- CDC offers free screening tests for breast and cervical cancer if you have a low-income, and you do not have health insurance. Find out if you qualify [here](#).

## HOW DO I SCHEDULE A CANCER SCREENING?

Call your doctor's office and tell them you'd like to schedule your cancer screening. They will advise you on the best approach.

If you don't have a doctor, call your local hospital, medical clinic, or health department, and explain your situation. They might be able to help you find a facility that does the test or point you to a clinic or doctor that can help. Some communities or hospitals offer mobile cancer screening units for certain types of cancer screening tests.

## CANCER DOESN'T WAIT AND NEITHER SHOULD YOU.

Cancer screenings are not fun, but it's important you do them to prevent cancer or find it early, when cancer is easier to treat. Call your doctor to find out which tests are right for you and to schedule these important tests today!

**GET  
SCREENED  
FOR  
CANCER**

**For more information,  
please visit [GetScreenedForCancer.org](http://GetScreenedForCancer.org)**