

BY THE NUMBERS

**45**

Is the new recommended age to begin colorectal cancer screening. This new change took effect in 2021.

**45%**

Of new colon cancer diagnoses occur in individuals younger than 65 years.

Source: [Stanford Medicine](#).



NEW SCREENING AVAILABLE

There is a new colon cancer blood test ([Shield Blood Test](#)) that was recently approved by the FDA for adults 45+. For those that may be reluctant to undergo a traditional colonoscopy or issues with access to care, this may be an option. Please check your benefits for coverage. **However, a blood test is not a replacement for a colonoscopy.**

Volume 5, Edition 9 | September 2026

FOCUS

Colon Cancer

Colon cancer or colorectal cancer is one of the most common yet highly preventable cancers. With rates rising among younger adults, it's more important than ever to understand your risk, know when screening is recommended, and talk with your healthcare provider about what is right for you.



DETAIL

Let's [reduce our risks of colon cancer](#)

By Isaac A. Cruz, Sr. Population Health & Wellbeing Consultant

Colon cancer has become the leading cause of cancer-related death among Americans under age 50. Although, colon cancer has been considered a disease for older adults, [the rates of younger adults](#), in their 30s and 40s, have been rising steadily. There is no clear reason behind this concerning trend. Many younger patients diagnosed with colon cancer do not have [typical risk factors](#) such as family history that might warrant an early screening. Taking proactive steps today such as understanding [risk factors](#) can help support your health for years to come.

Risk Factors That You Can Control

- **Diet:** Highly processed diets and low servings of fiber and vegetables is associated with a higher risk of colon cancer.
- **Physical Inactivity & Obesity:** A sedentary lifestyle is linked to higher cancer rates.

Risk Factors That You Cannot Control

- **Age:** Risk increases with age, especially after 50. However, with rising rates in younger adults, it is important to bring awareness.
- **Race & Ethnicity:** American Indian and Alaska Native populations have the highest colon cancer incidence rates followed by African Americans.