



How to Increase Colorectal Cancer Screening Rates in Practice

Why screen for colorectal cancer?

- Screening not only can prevent colorectal cancer, but it also can reduce mortality.
- Patients are more aware of and motivated toward colorectal cancer screening than ever before.
- Providers are increasingly asked to raise colorectal cancer screening rates as health plans, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), and other third-party payers are looking at colorectal cancer screening rates as a quality measure.



Four Essentials for Improved Screening Rates

- 1. Your Recommendation:** Regular *recommendations* by the patient's physician are the single most important factor in a patient's decision whether to be screened for colorectal cancer.
- 2. An Office Policy:** *Office policies* are the foundation of a systematic approach to colorectal cancer screening; effective clinical practices are built on clear policies, well-designed systems, effective communications, and quality reviews.
- 3. An Office Reminder System:** *Reminder systems* can be directed at providers, patients, or both.
- 4. An Effective Communication System:** *Effective communication* is a cornerstone of good practice; a clinician's communication skills are related to patient satisfaction, which affects outcomes.

Resources for Clinicians

Created by clinicians for clinicians, the Primary Care Clinician's Evidence-based Toolbox and Guide can help improve colorectal cancer screening in your practice and provides advice to help make your screening practices more efficient.

The guide is available through the Web sites of the National Colorectal Cancer Roundtable (www.nccrt.org); and the American Cancer Society (www.cancer.org/colonmd) under "For Your Clinical Practice."

How to Increase Colorectal Cancer Screening Rates in Practice: A Primary Care Clinician's Evidence-based Toolbox and Guide

In addition to other helpful items, the toolbox and guide includes the following:

- Checklist for increased screening, office policies, reminder systems, and communication aids
- Sample office screening policies
- Template telephone scripts for patient follow-up
- Sample reminder letters to patients at average and increased risk
- Sample tracking sheet for preventive care examinations
- Descriptions of electronic reminder systems for patients and providers

The guide is now available in PDF and interactive, web-based formats.



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