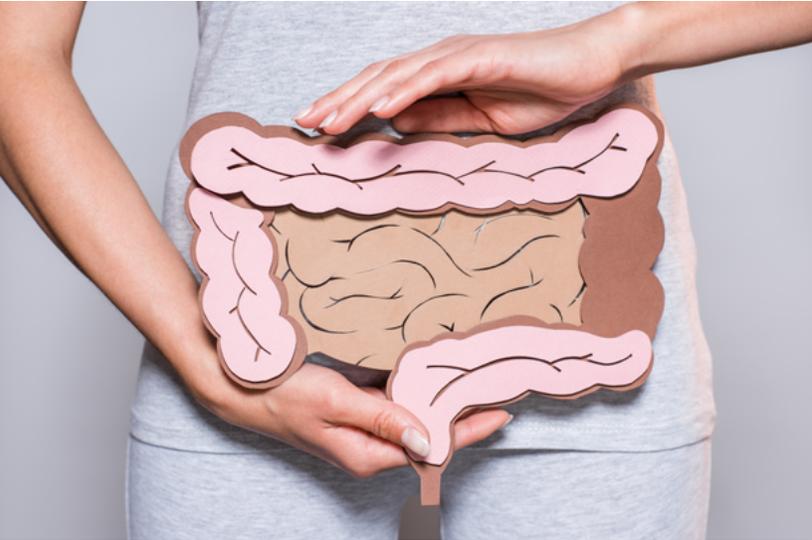




**Sara Cooper, PhD**  
Faculty Investigator at  
HudsonAlpha Institute for  
Biotechnology and Project  
Lead for the Information  
is Power initiative.

# Colorectal Cancer

**Colorectal cancer** is the third most common cancer in the U.S. and the second leading cause of cancer deaths for both men and women combined. The American Cancer Society (ACS) estimated 53,000 people will die from CRC in 2020. Contrary to what those numbers would suggest, it's actually one of the most preventable cancers. Sara Cooper, PhD is here to answer some of the questions about the risk of colorectal cancer.



ten years if everything looks normal. Without family history or other risk factors, colonoscopies should be scheduled as soon as a person turns 50, but no later. It is essential to schedule a colonoscopy as soon as you are eligible.

## **Q Who is at risk of colorectal cancer?**

**A** Age can be a risk factor for this type of cancer, with the majority of diagnoses in people over 50. Gender does not seem to play a factor though, considering it's the third leading cause of cancer in both male and female U.S. adults.

To understand your risk, the *Information is Power* test can test for your genetic risk factors. Other factors include people with type 2 diabetes, inflammatory bowel conditions, including Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis, as well as people who have unhealthy body weights, regularly consume alcohol, smoke, or eat processed meat.

Any family history of colorectal cancer can double the likelihood of being diagnosed, while a first-degree relative—aka sibling, parent, or child—with certain polyps can up to quadruple the likelihood of colorectal cancer. The *Information is Power* test not only tells you your risk for colon cancer, but your siblings and family might also benefit from this important information.

## **Q What's the best way to screen?**

**A** The colonoscopy is the gold standard for colorectal cancer screening and is recommended that these exams only need to be repeated every

## **Q What are some of the best ways to prevent colon cancer?**

**A** Eating a high fiber diet with dark colored fruits, like berries, and whole grains can support optimal gut health. It is also important to limit consumption of red and processed meat, and alcohol to prevent colorectal cancer. Developing healthy habits, like exercise and eating lots of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, can prevent obesity which is related to 12 different cancers, including colorectal cancer.

## **Q Is colon cancer preventable?**

**A** Colorectal cancer can be deadly, and as the 3rd most common cancer it is estimated to kill 53,000 people in the US this year. However, when detected early through colonoscopy, standard treatments are highly effective: 90% of patients survive 5 years after diagnosis. In contrast, only 14% of patients with late-stage metastatic disease survive 5 years. Proper screening is key to treating colorectal cancer effectively. The *Information is Power* test provides information about genetic risk that could help determine whether earlier screening is warranted based on your genetics.

## **Q How do I get an Information is Power kit?**

**A** Testing can be initiated by visiting the website at [information-is-power.org](http://information-is-power.org) Choose **ORDER TEST**. After entering some basic information, you will receive a test kit through the mail. The test is an easy-to-take check swab. You return it in the provided envelope. You will receive your results in the mail.