



# PREVENTION OF COLORECTAL CANCER

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO KNOW?



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**Review**

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R488p Ricarte, Mônica Costa  
Prevenção do câncer colorretal: o que você precisa saber? / Mônica  
Costa Ricarte; Néria Invernizzi da Silveira. São Paulo: Sobest, 2019.  
7 p. : il.

<https://doi.org/10.30886/cartilha012019>

1. Câncer colorretal. 2. Cólon – Câncer. 3. Reto – Câncer . 4. Câncer –  
Fatores de risco. 5. Colonoscopia. I. Silveira, Néria Invernizzi da. II. Título.

CDD – 616.944

CDU – 616.006

Library catalog card prepared by Angela de Andrade Viana – CRB-8/8111

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

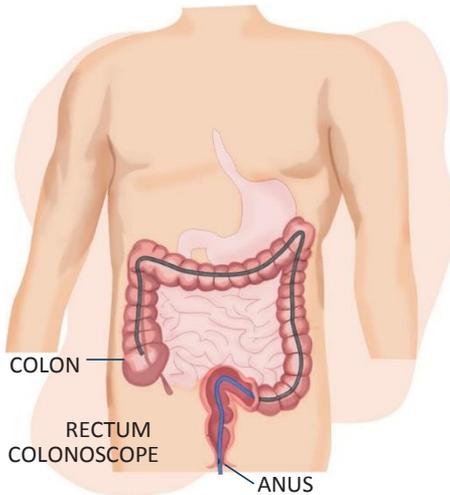
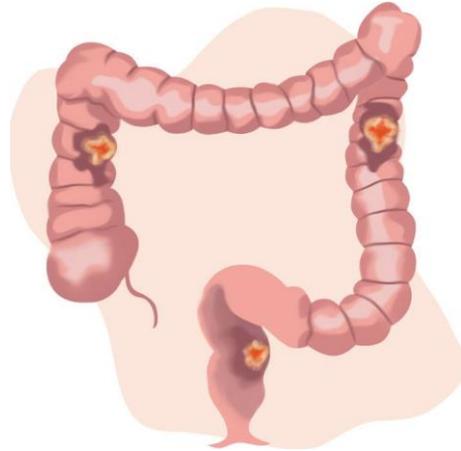
WHAT IS COLORECTAL CANCER? .....	2
WHAT ARE THE RISK FACTORS FOR COLORECTAL CANCER? .....	3
WHAT SIGNS SHOULD WE WATCH OUT FOR?.....	5
HOW TO PREVENT COLORECTAL CANCER? .....	6
REFERENCES.....	7



## WHAT IS COLORECTAL CANCER?

Colorectal cancer occurs when tumors form in the large intestine and rectum.

Many of them are the result of polyps, which are small benign stalk-like growths or bumps on the wall of the colon or rectum and which grow slowly, although, after a few years they can become malignant tumors.



This type of cancer affects both men and women and appears more frequently after the age of 50. Family predisposition is a risk factor for the disease to manifest before that age.

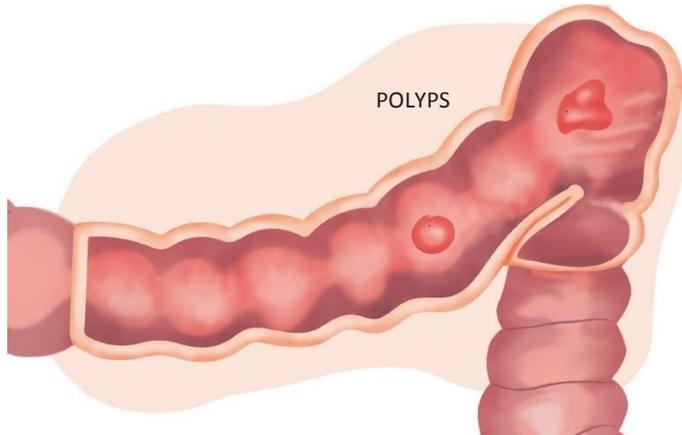
Colonoscopies and fecal occult blood tests are very important examinations for the early detection of the disease.

With periodic examinations and early diagnosis, colorectal cancer is considered highly curable.

## WHAT ARE THE RISK FACTORS FOR COLORECTAL CANCER?

**AGE:** Being over 50 years of age is an important risk factor; however, the disease can occur in younger people.

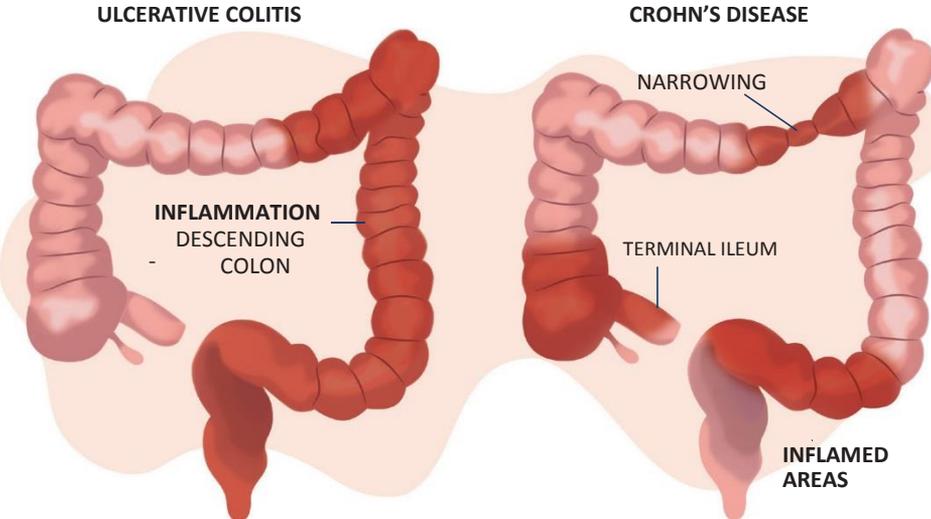
**POLYPS:** These are benign tumors that develop on the inner wall of the colon and rectum. Approximately 60% of bowel polyps are adenomas and can present a potential for malignancy. Diagnosis and early treatment are very important, especially for people above age 50 and those with a history of colorectal cancer in the family.



**A FAMILY HISTORY OF BOWEL CANCER:** The more people from the same family that have had colorectal cancer, the greater the risk of developing the disease. If the individual has close relatives (father, mother, brother, uncles or grandparents) who had bowel cancer, the risk of his developing the disease increases greatly, especially if the disease affected a relative who was less than 40 years old.

**PERSONAL HISTORY OF OTHER TYPES OF CANCER:** Women who have had ovarian, endometrial (uterine), or breast cancer have a greater risk of developing colorectal cancer.

**INFLAMMATORY BOWEL DISEASE:** Ulcerative rectocolitis and Crohn's Disease are benign diseases that cause chronic inflammation of the digestive mucosa. Depending on the severity and duration of the disease, they can present greater risk of colorectal cancer.



PLACES OF MANIFESTATION OF INFLAMMATORY BOWEL DISEASE

## WHAT SIGNS SHOULD WE WATCH OUT FOR?

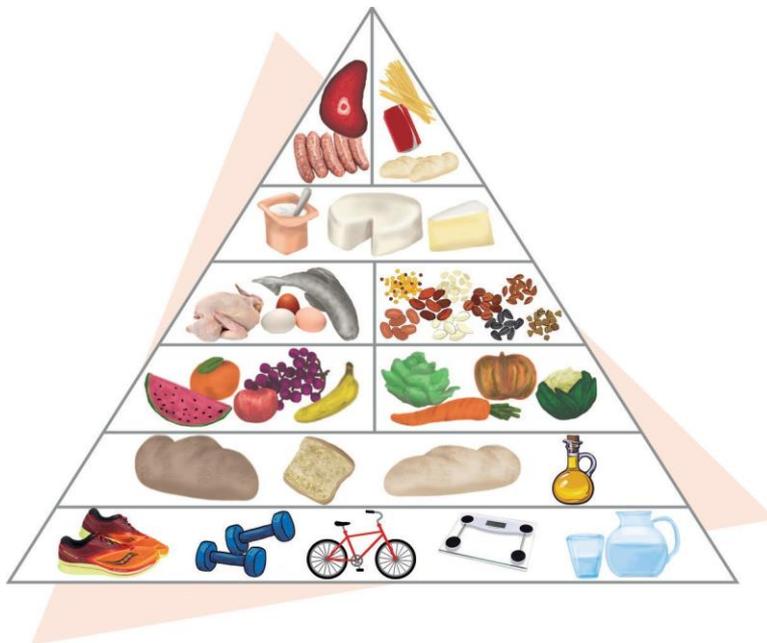


Look for a proctologist if you have any of the following signs and symptoms:

- \_ Blood in the feces;
- \_ Pain and frequent abdominal cramps that last more than 30 days;
- \_ Recent changes in bowel rhythm (when an individual who used to have normal bowel movements now has diarrhea or constipation with no definite cause);
- \_ Rapid, unintentional weight loss; fatigue and weakness.

## HOW TO PREVENT COLORECTAL CANCER

- \_ Adopt a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, and grains;
- \_ Avoid too much red meat and cold cuts;
- \_ Practice physical exercises regularly;
- \_ Prevent obesity;
- \_ Do not smoke and do not drink alcoholic beverages in excess;
- \_ Have periodic colonoscopies starting at 50 years of age—this is the most important and efficient examination to prevent the disease;
- \_ People with a high risk of developing colorectal cancer should have colonoscopies starting at the age of 40.



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