

# Colorectal Cancer Screening

## What Providers Need to Know

### Latest Screening Guidelines

The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) recently expanded recommended adult colorectal cancer screening to those aged 45 to 49 years.<sup>1</sup> These guideline changes reflect that:

- **There has been a dramatic increase in colorectal cancer among those aged 40 to 49 years.** By expanding the recommendations and offering more screening options, we can help members live the healthiest lives possible.
- **Screening detects colon cancer at an early stage when it is curable.** The five-year survival rate for those treated in early stages is 90% as compared to 25% for those whose cancer is detected in later stages.<sup>2</sup>

Thanks to the new guidelines, many insurance plans cover colorectal cancer screenings with no copays (according to USPSTF) as mandated by the Affordable Care Act.

#### Who should get colorectal cancer screening?

All adults, ages 45 to 75, should be screened for colorectal cancer. For those ages 76 to 85, screening should be discussed with their provider based on preferences, overall health, and past screening history.

Those younger than 45 who have risk factors (e.g., family history, hereditary diseases, or type 2 diabetes) should discuss the need for screening with their providers.

#### What screening does Select Health cover?

Select Health covers colonoscopy and stool-based testing as follows:

- **Colonoscopy:** Members should have a colonoscopy every 10 years or every 3 to 5 years if there are risk factors (e.g., a history of polyps, family history, or other factors; see information at right).
- **Stool-based Testing:** These at-home tests of stool samples can be mailed into the lab for analysis (see instructions on [page 2](#)). Select Health promotes fecal immunochemical testing (FIT) because of its accuracy, cost, and frequency. **FIT testing** should be done every calendar year for eligible Select Health Advantage (Medicare) members and every 365 days for commercial members. See [page 2](#) for eligibility criteria.

Colorectal cancer history codes are: **Z85.038, Z85.048.**

#### What risk factors are associated with colon cancer?

Colon cancer risk factors include:

- **Age.** About 90% of the time, colorectal cancer occurs in adults older than 45.
- **Family History.** A close relative who has had colon cancer or a colon polyp may increase risk.
- **Ethnicity.** Rates of colorectal cancer are higher in African Americans compared with other races.
- **Medical Conditions.** Inflammatory bowel disease may increase risk of developing colon cancer.
- **Lifestyle.** Members can mitigate some risk factors (e.g., by stopping smoking, improving diet, being active, and keeping a healthy weight).

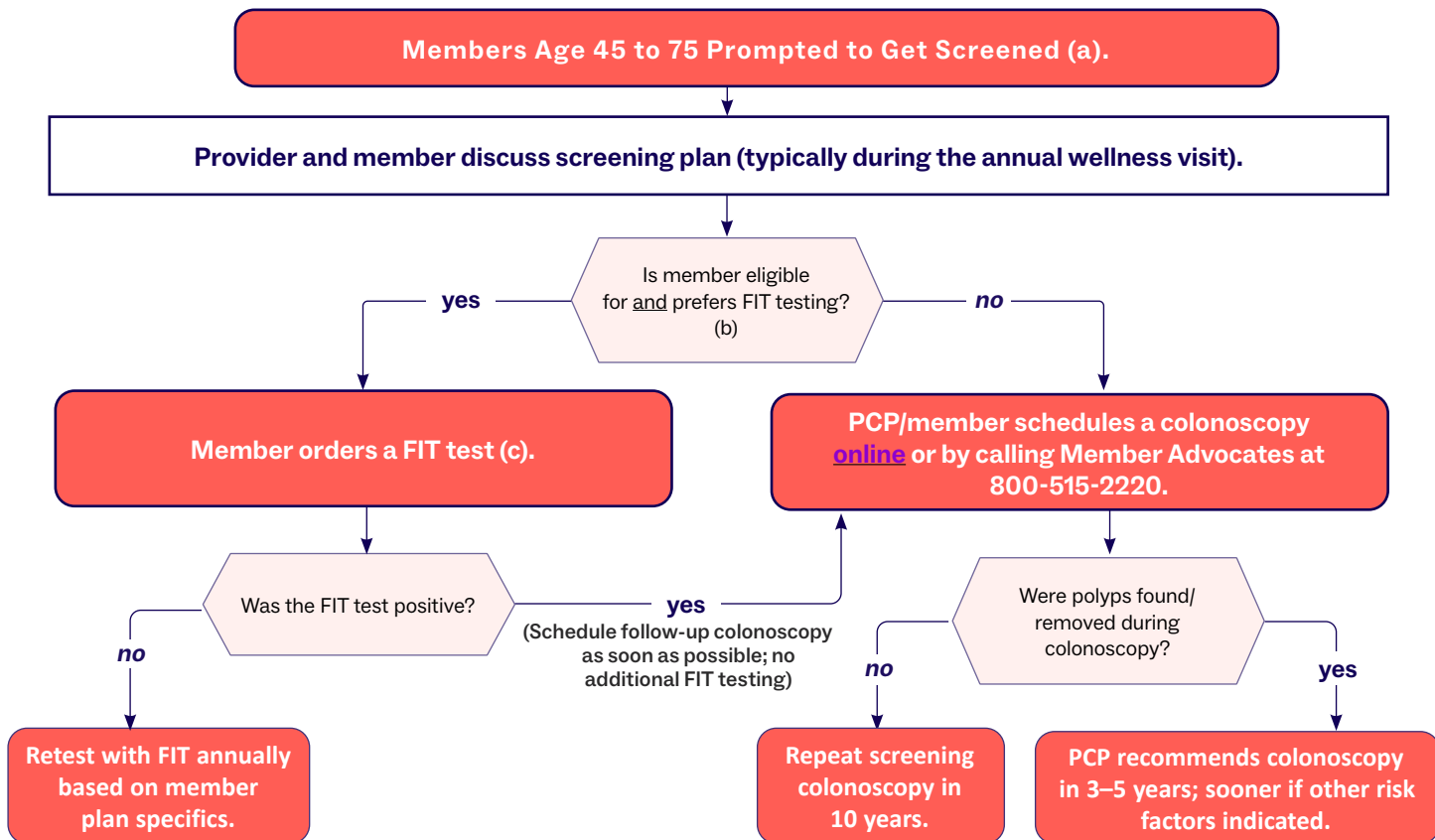
#### What is the process flow for screening?

The algorithm and associated notes on [page 2](#) provide a quick view of the care process associated with colorectal cancer screening.

Be sure to contact Select Health Member Services (**800-538-5038**) to verify plan-specific coverage for preventive screening tests.

# Colorectal Cancer Screening, Continued

## ▶ ALGORITHM: COLORECTAL CANCER SCREENING



### ALGORITHM NOTES

#### (a) Member Screening Prompts

Members are prompted to get screened when:

- Primary care providers review prevention screening status with members at annual wellness visits and develop a member-specific screening plan based on criteria.
- Select Health sends reminder letters to members when records indicate that they are due for colorectal cancer screening.

#### (b) FIT Test Exclusions

- History of polyps or colon cancer
- Hemorrhoids
- Ulcerative colitis or Crohn's disease
- Visible blood in the stool or on toilet paper
- A previously positive FIT test
- A normal colonoscopy in the last five years

#### (c) How to Order FIT Tests

1. Patients in Utah, Idaho, and Nevada can [order an at-home kit online](#) through Intermountain Health.
2. If the patient meets the criteria for an on-demand test kit, a pharmacist will review and process the request.
3. After the test is completed and returned by mail, results will be available in the [Intermountain Health patient portal](#).

1. U.S. Preventive Services Task Force. *Final Recommendation Statement - Colorectal Cancer: Screening*. May 18, 2021. <https://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/uspstf/recommendation/colorectal-cancer-screening#fullrecommendationstart>. Accessed September 13, 2021.
2. American Cancer Society. 2017. Colorectal Cancer Facts & Figures 2017-2019, Publication No. 861717. Available at <https://www.cancer.org/content/dam/cancer-org/research/cancer-facts-and-statistics/colorectal-cancer-facts-and-figures/colorectal-cancer-facts-and-figures-2017-2019.pdf>. Accessed February 7, 2024.