

Top 10 Reasons NOT to get a screening colonoscopy:

10. *I'm too young to have a colonoscopy.* Screening for colorectal cancer is recommended for patients beginning at age 45. Patients are developing colorectal cancer at a younger age than ever before and it is important to begin your screening at age 45.
9. *I don't have a family history of colorectal cancer, so I don't need a colonoscopy.* Research tells us that about 85% of patients who are diagnosed with colorectal cancer do not have a family history of this disease. What this means is that the majority of patients with colorectal cancer are the first ones in their family to have this kind of cancer. This is why it is so important to undergo screening even if you don't have a family history.
8. *I've just had a little bit of bleeding.* Bleeding is not normal and may be a sign of a simpler problem (like hemorrhoids) or may be a sign of a more serious problem like cancer. If you notice bleeding, please speak with your doctor about how to have this evaluated. Many colorectal cancer patients experience bleeding that was attributed to "just hemorrhoids" only to find out after down the road that the bleeding was coming for a cancer.
7. *I haven't had any bleeding so I don't need a colonoscopy.* Many patients with colorectal polyps or cancer do not pass blood that they can see. Screening can detect growths before they start to cause bleeding.
6. *I don't have health insurance to cover the cost of the screening.* Many providers are affiliated with hospitals that have screening outreach programs that may cover screening. Please reach out to a nearby provider's office and ask about what options they are familiar with.
5. *I had a colonoscopy 10 years ago and I don't need further screening.* If you had a normal colonoscopy 10 or more years ago it is time to plan an updated screening exam to make sure you have not grown a polyp or cancer since your last screening.
4. *I can't drink that clean out solution.* There are a variety of different ways to clean out your system before undergoing a colonoscopy. If you've had difficulty with a prior bowel preparation, please talk with your provider about trying a different clean out for your next procedure.
3. *I'm too old to have a colonoscopy.* Screening is recommended for most patients until about age 75. Relatively healthy patients between the ages of 76 and 85 may also be considered for screening.
2. *Colonoscopy is too risky.* For the vast majority of patients, colonoscopy is a safe procedure with a very low risk of complications. Please speak with your provider for an individualized risk assessment that pertains to your specific health history.
1. *The wait time is too long to get in to be seen and to set up the colonoscopy.* Many providers have a process to specifically decrease the wait time for patients looking to schedule a screening colonoscopy. Some clinicians offer virtual telehealth options for the pre-procedure intake and many providers don't require a formal pre-procedure visit for healthier patients seeking a screening colonoscopy. Please call your provider and see what can be arranged to get you the screening you need.