

Cancer Screening

Cancer screening exams are medical tests performed when a person has no symptoms.

Know Your Risks

MD Anderson has specific cancer screening guidelines based on your chances of getting cancer. People at increased risk have a higher chance of getting cancer than people at average risk. Those at increased risk may need to get additional tests, start screening at an earlier age or have cancer screening exams more frequently.

It's important to know if people in your family have had cancer. This information helps your doctor find out if you're at increased risk. You and your doctor can use this information to make a well-informed decision about cancer screening.

MD Anderson's screening guidelines for people at average risk are listed below. To see screening guidelines for those at increased risk for cancer, visit www.mdanderson.org/screeningguidelines.

Breast

All women should be familiar with their breasts so that they will notice any changes and report them to their doctor without delay.

Age 20 to 39, you should:

- Have a clinical breast exam every 1 to 3 years.
- Practice breast awareness.

Age 40 and older, you should:

- Have a clinical breast exam every year.
- Get a mammogram every year.
- Practice breast awareness.

Schedule a clinical breast exam at the time of, or just before, your regularly scheduled mammogram. If you are age 35 or older, ask your doctor to calculate your breast cancer risk using the Gail Model.



Cervical

Age 21 to 29, you should:

- Get a liquid-based Pap test every two years.

Age 30 to 65, you should choose ONE of the options below:

1. Get a liquid-based Pap test and human papillomavirus (HPV) test every three years as long as your results are negative.
2. Speak with your doctor about a different testing schedule if your test results are positive.

Age 65 and older, you should:

- Speak with your doctor about whether you need to continue screening if you have had three or more normal Pap tests, and no abnormal Pap test, in the last 10 years.

Age 30 and older, who have had a hysterectomy but have not had cervical cancer or severe cervical dysplasia, you should:

- Speak with your doctor about whether you need to continue screening if your hysterectomy included removal of the cervix.
- Get a liquid-based Pap test and Human Papillomavirus (HPV) test if your hysterectomy did not include removal of the cervix. Repeat these tests every three years if both test results are normal.

Quick Reference

Women age 21 to 39

- Clinical breast exam every one to three years
- Liquid-based Pap test every two years
- Liquid-based Pap test and HPV test every three years beginning at age 30
- Skin exam (if you have any suspicious skin areas, non-healing sores or changes in a mole or freckle)

Women over age 40

- Mammogram and clinical breast exam every year
- Liquid-based Pap test and HPV test every three years
- Colonoscopy for women age 50 and older every 10 years
- Skin exam (if you have any suspicious skin areas, non-healing sores or changes in a mole or freckle)

These guidelines are for women at average risk. Take time to discuss your own cancer risks with your health care provider. MD Anderson screening guidelines for women at increased risk are at www.mdanderson.org/screeningguidelines.

Quick Reference

Men age 20 to 49

- Skin exam (if you have any suspicious skin areas, non-healing sores or changes in a mole or freckle)

Men over age 45

- Annual digital rectal exam and prostate-specific antigen (PSA) blood test for African American men and men with a family history (father, brother, son) of prostate cancer

Men over age 50

- Annual digital rectal exam and prostate-specific antigen (PSA) blood test
- Colonoscopy every 10 years
- Skin exam (if you have any suspicious skin areas, non-healing sores or changes in a mole or freckle)

Prostate

Prostate screening is not appropriate for all men. Beginning at age 40, men should speak with their health care provider about the benefits and limitations of prostate screening. A health care provider can help you determine if prostate screening is right for you and at what age to begin screening.

For most men, annual prostate screening should begin at age 50. MD Anderson recommends:

Digital Rectal Exam:

The physician inserts a lubricated, gloved finger into the rectum to feel if the prostate gland is enlarged.

Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) Test:

This is a simple blood test.

Because prostate cancer is a slow-growing cancer, specialists advise that screening exams are not recommended for men whose life expectancy is 10 years or less. A PSA blood test also is not necessary in men age 75 or older who have a normal digital rectal exam and no symptoms of prostate cancer.

Colorectal

Men and women age 50 and older should do ONE of the following:

1. Get a colonoscopy every 10 years. This test is preferred by MD Anderson to find colorectal cancer and prevent the disease by removing polyps. Polyps are abnormal growths that may become cancer.
2. Have a virtual colonoscopy (also called Computed Tomographic (CT) Colonography) every five years. A colonoscopy will be performed if polyps are found.
3. Take a Fecal Occult Blood Test (FOBT) every year. This test finds hidden blood in the stool. This may be a sign of cancer. The FOBT does not prevent colorectal cancer. If the doctor finds blood in your stool, you may need to get a colonoscopy.

If you choose a virtual colonoscopy, check with your insurance provider before scheduling an exam. Not all insurance providers cover the cost of this exam.

MD Anderson does not recommend colorectal cancer screening for men and women age 85 and older. Screening for adults ages 76 to 85 should be considered on an individual basis by a person's doctor.

**These screening guidelines apply to men and women who are expected to live for at least another 10 years. The guidelines are not for men and women who have a health condition that would make it hard for a doctor to find and treat cancer.*

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS
MD Anderson
Cancer Center

Making Cancer History®



MD Anderson Resources

The Cancer Prevention Center can help you understand your risk of developing cancer through risk assessment and, when appropriate, genetic testing. The center offers personalized risk-reduction strategies, including healthy lifestyle recommendations and the use of medications to reduce cancer risk. Specialists perform risk-based cancer screening exams based on age, gender and cancer risk factors.

MD Anderson provides cancer care services at five convenient locations in the greater Houston area: Bay Area, Katy, Texas Medical Center, Sugar Land and The Woodlands.

For more information about MD Anderson programs or services, or to make an appointment, contact askMDAnderson at 1-877-632-6789 and ask for Carla, or visit www.mdanderson.org/ask.

Want to learn how you can prevent cancer?

Get a personalized action plan by completing MD Anderson's Cancer Risk Check at www.mdanderson.org/riskcheck.

These guidelines are for men at average risk. Take time to discuss your own cancer risks with your health care provider. MD Anderson screening guidelines for men at increased risk are at www.mdanderson.org/screeningguidelines.