



# WOMEN'S HEALTH

## What Women Should Know About Colorectal Cancer

(NAPSA)—Adding up a few statistics could help improve women's health.

While many people believe that women are less likely to get colorectal cancer than men, the odds are actually even. Men and women are equally likely to be affected by colorectal cancer.

In fact, colorectal cancer is the third-leading cause of cancer death in women behind breast and lung cancers.

More than 71,000 women are diagnosed with colorectal cancer each year and nearly 26,000 die from the disease. Fortunately, these statistics can be changed.

For a start, screening can detect not only the cancer but the growths known as polyps that may eventually become cancerous. These growths are easy to remove during screening.

"With regular colorectal cancer screening, more than one-third of colorectal cancer deaths could be avoided," said Maria Cruz-Correa, M.D., spokesperson for the American Gastroenterological Association and from the University of Puerto Rico Comprehensive Cancer Center. There are several methods for colorectal cancer screening. Colonoscopy, one of the best screening methods, allows for detection and removal of polyps.

Along with regular screenings, healthy lifestyle choices are the smart prescriptive steps against colorectal cancer. Here's how you can help reduce your risk:

- Eat more foods that are high in fiber—whole grains, fruits, vegetables.



**Women are just as likely to get colorectal cancer as men. Screening and lifestyle choices can help lower your risk.**

- Eat more cruciferous vegetables—cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, brussels sprouts.
- Increase calcium intake—low-fat milk, shellfish, salmon, calcium supplements with vitamin D.
- Decrease fats—oils, butters, red meats.
- Limit your intake of charcoal-broiled foods and avoid salt-cured foods.
- Exercise regularly.
- Talk to your doctor about taking low daily doses of aspirin or other nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs.

Colorectal cancer—cancer of the colon and rectum—can be cured if it is caught early. Talk to your gastroenterologist about your risk factors and need for screening. For more information on colorectal cancer and to find a gastroenterologist in your area, visit [www.gastro.org/patient](http://www.gastro.org/patient).