

## Let's talk about colorectal cancer

HT Cafe · 17 Mar 2022 · 05

Colorectal cancer is a type of cancer that affects the colon and rectum. In India, colorectal cancer has been ranked as the fifth leading cause of cancer death. Compared to the West, we have a lower incidence of colorectal cancer, but it is associated with a higher death rate as most cases are usually diagnosed in advanced stages only.

### SYMPTOMS:

Most of the early-stage colorectal cancer have no symptoms at all. In later stages, patients experience pain in the abdomen, abdominal mass, blood in the stool, thin stool, incomplete evacuation, and new onset constipation.

### RISK FACTORS:

Older age

Familial history of colorectal cancer Environmental factors such as diet and lifestyle—mainly high fat, more red meat and low fibre Obesity

Chronic smoking and alcohol consumption

Known cases of ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease

### TREATMENT:

In the present era, colorectal cancer is 100% preventable, treatable, and completely beatable.

Polyp can be cured without surgery.

Early-stage cancer can be cured with minimal invasive surgery. An advanced stage can be treated with surgery along with chemotherapy and radiation. Even metastatic disease that spreads to the liver can be managed well with newer drugs using targeted therapy such as cetuximab, bevacizumab, panitumumab, and even immunotherapy in certain eligible patients.

### SCREENING TOOL:

Colonoscopy should be started at the age of 50 and can be repeated every 10 years.

### HOW TO REDUCE THE RISK:

Adhere to a healthy diet, low fat, high fibre, fruits and vegetables. Red meat should be limited to less than two servings per week. Regular exercise for 45 minutes. The author of this article is Dr Pushpak Chirmade (For more details, visit: <https://>

Disclaimer: The veracity of any health claim made in the above article is responsibility of the concerned doctor/hospital