



Colorectal Cancer Screening (COL) Guide

Importance of Colon Cancer Screening

Colorectal cancer represents 8% of all new cancer cases in the United States. 4.2% of men and women will be diagnosed with colorectal cancer at some point during their lifetimes. Screening can be effective for finding precancerous lesions (polyps) that could later become malignant. The 5 year survival rate for people whose colorectal cancer found in the early stage is close to 90%.

Measure Description

Percentage of patients 45-75 years of age who had appropriate screening for colorectal cancer.

Screening Tests and Frequency

Measure is to be submitted a minimum of **once per performance period** for patients seen during the period

Test Name	Frequency
Fecal Occult Blood	Annually
Flexible Sigmoidoscopy	Every 5 years
Colonoscopy	Every 10 years
Cologuard/FIT-DNA	Every 3 years
CT Colonography	Every 5 years

Medical Records Documentation

Any of the following documentation is acceptable:

- Documentation in the office note when the specific colorectal screening was performed (include date and results/findings)
- A copy of the report in the patient’s medical record
- A pathology report that indicates the type of screening and the date
 - For pathology reports that don't indicate the type of screening and for incomplete procedures, include:
 - Evidence that scope advanced beyond splenic flexure meets criteria for completed colonoscopy
 - Evidence that scope advanced into sigmoid colon meets criteria for completed flexible sigmoidoscopy

Tips for Improving Performance

- Encourage patients who are resistant to having a colonoscopy to have a stool test that they can complete at home (either gFOBT or iFOBT) **Note:** The iFOBT/FIT has fewer dietary restrictions and samples
- Clearly document patients with ileostomies, which implies colon removal (exclusion), and patients with a history of colon cancer (more and more frequent)
- Set care gap “alerts” in your electronic medical record
- Act quickly for members who have a positive stool test result
- Request to have any colorectal cancer screening results sent to you if done at a specialty office



Denominator

Patients 45-75 years of age with a visit during the measurement period.

Numerator

Patients with one or more screenings for colorectal cancer. Appropriate screenings are defined by any one of the following criteria:

- Fecal occult blood test (FOBT) during the measurement period (MP)
- Flexible sigmoidoscopy during the MP or the four years prior
- Colonoscopy during the MP or the nine years prior
- Computed tomography (CT) colonography during the MP or the four years prior
- Fecal immunochemical DNA test (FIT-DNA) during the MP or the two years prior

Note: Do not count digital rectal exams (DRE) fecal occult blood tests (FOBTs) performed in an office setting or performed on a sample collected via DRE

Exclusions

- Patients with a history of colorectal cancer (does not include cancer of the small intestine) or past history of total colectomy for colorectal cancer (**G9711**)
- Received hospice (**G9710**) or palliative care (**G9993**) during the measurement year
- Medicare patients 66 years of age or older who are enrolled in an institutional Special Needs Plan (SNP) or living long-term in an institution with POS code 32, 33, 34, 54 or 56 for more than 90 consecutive days during the measurement period (**G9901**)
- Patients who died anytime during the measurement year
- Age 66 and older with at least one claim/encounter for frailty during the measurement period **AND** a dispensed medication for dementia (Donepezil, Galantamine, Rivastigmine, Memantine) during the measurement period or the year prior to the measurement period (**G2101**)
- Patients 66 and older with at least one claim/encounter for frailty during the measurement period **AND** either one acute inpatient encounter with a diagnosis of advanced illness or two outpatient, observation, ED or non acute inpatient encounters on different dates of service with an advanced illness diagnosis during the measurement period of the year prior to the measurement period (**G2101**)

CPT II Exclusion Codes

- Personal history of other malignant neoplasm of large intestine (**Z85.038**)
- Personal history of other malignant neoplasm of rectum, rectosigmoid junction, and anus (**Z85.048**)
- Colorectal cancer, active (**C18.0-9, C19-20, C21.2, C21.8, C78.5**)

Disclaimer: *This information is not intended to dictate or substitute your professional judgment in a particular patient.*

References

[CMS, Quality ID #113 \(NQF 0034\): Colorectal Cancer Screening \(2024\)](#)

[Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield, Colorectal Cancer Screening \(COL\) \(2024\)](#)

[Humana, Quality Indicator Reference Guide for Physicians \(2024\)](#)

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