

# Home Screening Tests for Colorectal Cancer

Your healthcare provider may recommend you use a home screening test to check for colorectal cancer.

The results of these tests can let your healthcare provider know if you need further testing, like a colonoscopy.

The Fecal Occult Blood Test is a simple screening test you can do at home, at the recommendation of your healthcare provider. If recommended over other tests, it should be done once a year.

When polyps and cancers become irritated, they can leak blood into the stool, but the amount of blood may be too small to see.

Fecal occult blood tests detect this blood.

There are two types of Fecal Occult Blood Tests. Guaiac Fecal Occult Blood Test and Fecal Immunochemical Test.

The Guaiac Fecal Occult Blood Test is designed to find any hidden blood in the stool.

This is not just a cancer test.

In addition to blood from cancer, the test may also pick up blood in the stool from pain medicines, ulcers, hemorrhoids, inflammation in your intestinal tract, or certain items in the diet.

To improve the accuracy of the test, you should eliminate the following items from your diet for at least two days before the test and during the test: Vitamin C in excess of 250 milligrams, red meat, horseradish, radishes and other uncooked fruits and vegetables.

The Fecal Immunochemical Test, or FIT, looks for human hemoglobin and doesn't require you to make any dietary changes beforehand.

Your provider will let you know if any medicine changes are necessary ahead of time.

Because it rarely requires a change in food or medicine beforehand, this test is more commonly done than the guaiac test.

Both the Guaiac Fecal Occult Blood Test and the FIT involve using a stool sample to get a quick reading.

You will give your provider or laboratory your sample. Contact them for results.

Each kit is different. Make sure to follow the instructions for the kit you use to get an accurate reading.

Another home screening test your healthcare provider might recommend is a Stool DNA test.

A Stool DNA Test is used to check for different changes in DNA that can appear in polyps or cancer cells.

There are no special dietary changes needed before this test.

Your healthcare provider will talk with you about the results of your home screening test. If the test is positive, your provider may recommend a colonoscopy to get more information.