

One STEP Ahead

of colorectal cancer and multiple myeloma



March | Join us by registering at: ascension.org/GaviniCancer

Colorectal cancer

According to the National Cancer Institute, **colorectal cancer is one of the most preventable forms of cancer.** In fact, the American Institute for Cancer Research says nearly 50% of the most common cancers are preventable. Cancer prevention can begin at the kitchen table. In celebration of Colorectal Cancer Prevention Month, we encourage you to learn about how your diet, nutrition and physical activity impact your risk for all cancers — especially colorectal cancer.

What is colorectal cancer?

Colorectal cancer starts in the colon or rectum. These cancers can also be called colon cancer or rectal cancer, depending on where they start. Colon cancer and rectal cancer are often grouped together because they have many features in common.

Signs and symptoms include:

- Change in bowel habits, such as constipation or diarrhea
- Blood in or on stool
- Abdominal or rectal pain, cramps or aches
- Change in composition of stool (ribbon-like)
- Weight loss
- Fatigue

Risk factors include:

- Family history and genetic syndrome, such as familial adenomatous polyposis, hereditary non-polyposis colorectal cancer or Lynch syndrome
- Being overweight or underweight
- A diet low in fruits and vegetables and high in meat, animal products and processed foods
- Sedentary lifestyle
- Tobacco and alcohol use

What can I do to reduce my risk of colorectal cancer?

- Eat a healthy, balanced diet
- Increase physical activity
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Limit alcohol consumption
- Avoid tobacco, smoking or vaping

Next steps:

- Talk to your doctor about whether a colonoscopy is needed.
- For more information, or to see if a noninvasive test such as FITKit® or Cologuard® is right for you, call [248-849-2781](tel:248-849-2781).



Multiple myeloma

What is multiple myeloma?

Multiple myeloma is cancer that begins in plasma cells, a type of white blood cell important for a healthy immune system. Over time, myeloma cells collect in bone marrow, forming tumors in many of the body's bones. These tumors may keep bone marrow from making enough healthy blood cells and weaken the bone.

Signs and symptoms include:

- Bone pain, especially in the spine or chest
- Nausea
- Constipation
- Loss of appetite
- Mental fogging
- Fatigue
- Frequent infections
- Weight loss

Risk factors include:

- Age: *More common in older adults*
- Gender
- Race: *Twice as common in African Americans*
- Family history
- Obesity
- Other plasma cell diseases
- A diet low in fruits and vegetables and high in meat, animal products and processed foods
- Sedentary lifestyle
- Tobacco and alcohol use

What can I do to reduce my risk of multiple myeloma?

Because many of the risk factors for multiple myeloma are out of your control, such as age, family history, race and gender, there are not many steps you can take to reduce your risk. However, having a diet high in fruits and vegetables and low in animal products, processed foods and sugar can reduce your risk for obesity. These behaviors have been identified as helping prevent cancer in general. In addition, engaging in consistent physical activity and stress management are associated with reduced risks for cancer.

Register for the March STEP Ahead virtual seminar by scanning the QR code below or visiting ascension.org/GaviniCancer. For more information, call 248-849-2781.

