



How Can Employers Save More Lives from Colorectal Cancer?

Learn what employers can do to advance the shared goal to reach screening rates of 80% and higher in adults ages 45 and older.

Colorectal cancer is the second-leading cause of cancer death in the United States among men and women combined,¹ yet it is often preventable.

The business community has an important role to play in promoting colorectal cancer screening and much to gain through saving on health care costs, promoting a healthy workforce with increased productivity, and demonstrating corporate social responsibility.

80% in Every Community is a National Colorectal Cancer Roundtable initiative in which more than 1,800 organizations are working toward the shared goal of reaching colorectal cancer screening rates of 80% and higher in communities across the nation.

Join the national effort to get 80% of adults ages 45 and older regularly screened for colorectal cancer.



The overall number of colorectal cancer cases is dropping, thanks to screening. We are helping save lives. You can help.

Everyone deserves to live a life free of colorectal cancer.

Working together we can achieve 80% in Every Community.



Why colorectal cancer?

- Approximately 1 in 23 men and 1 in 25 women will be diagnosed with colorectal cancer in their lifetime.²
- When adults get screened for colorectal cancer it can be detected early, when treatment is most likely to be successful, and in some cases, it can be prevented through the detection and removal of precancerous polyps.
- There are several recommended screening options, including colonoscopies and stool tests.³
- It is estimated that colorectal cancer-related direct medical costs in the US were \$21 billion in 2015 and are projected to increase to \$28 billion by 2030.⁴
- You have the power to make a significant difference in reducing the risk of colorectal cancer.


As an employer, here are five things you can do to be a leader in reaching 80% in Every Community:

1




Adopt 80% as a corporate commitment and establish a company-wide goal for colorectal cancer screening.

2




Educate your employees on important facts about colorectal cancer and screening options. We have resources to help.

3




Create a cancer screening-friendly work culture.

4



Engage your insurance provider(s) to ensure colorectal cancer screening is a top priority.

5



Be a role model and break the stigma.



It's now recommended that all men and women at average risk of colorectal cancer start regular screening at age 45. Yet, about 1 in 3 adults ages 50 and older – about 38 million people – is not getting screened as recommended.

1



Adopt 80% as a corporate commitment and establish a company-wide goal for colorectal cancer screening.

- Visit nccrt.org/pledge to pledge your support.
- Know the current colorectal screening rate for your employees and covered dependents ages 45 and older.
- Ask your insurance provider(s) for regular reports on the screening rate among your employees in that age group – and for recommendations on how to increase these rates.
- Use a Health Risk Assessment/Appraisal to survey employees about their use of recommended cancer screenings.
- Track your progress, and celebrate success!
- Use communications strategies and media outlets to promote your efforts and progress through electronic, social, and print media.

2



Educate your employees on important facts about colorectal cancer and screening options. We have resources to help.

- Use market research-tested messages to encourage employees to get screened. Visit nccrt.org/resource/2019messagingguidebook to find recommended messages and sample tools, including a template email from a CEO to employees.
- It's covered. Let your employees know that colorectal cancer screenings are covered by your health plan, with zero out-of-pocket costs in most cases.
- Offer screening at wellness events and in on-site clinics.
- If you need handouts, educational materials, or videos, visit:
 - cancer.org/colon
 - cdc.gov/cancer/dcpc/resources/index.htm



3



Create a cancer screening-friendly work culture.

- Offer paid time off for employees ages 45 and older who are at average risk and for younger employees who are at high risk of colorectal cancer to get screened.
 - When a person has a colonoscopy, they need to take a day off from work, which may be a very real barrier to screening for some of your employees.
 - By offering a comp day, you are sending an important message to your employees about the value you place on colorectal cancer screening and on their personal health.
 - Also, consider offering a comp day for employees who need to drive a family member to and from their colorectal cancer screening.
- Visit health.ny.gov/diseases/cancer/educational_materials/ to learn about New York State's guidance on paid leave policies for cancer screening.

4



Engage your insurance provider(s) to ensure colorectal cancer screening is a top priority.

- Insurers have the power to impact screening rates by tracking rates, educating physicians and patients, and setting goals and policies.
- Support efforts for all your employees to have health insurance.
- Select health plans that promote regular screening and practice innovative evidence-based strategies to drive utilization, such as patient and provider reminders.
- Ask your insurance provider(s) to review and implement best practices found in the Colorectal Cancer Screening Best Practices Handbook for Health Plans. Visit ncrt.org/health-plan-handbook to download a copy.

Early Age Onset Colorectal Cancer

Research now indicates half of new diagnoses are now in people 66 and younger. An estimated 18,000 cases of CRC (12%) were diagnosed in people under 50 in 2020, with 1 in 4 patients younger than 50 diagnosed with metastatic disease.⁵

It's more important than ever that we ensure everyone make a plan for getting regular, potentially life-saving screening as soon as they become eligible—at 45 for people at average risk or earlier for people at increased or high risk of the disease. People of any age with symptoms should undergo an appropriate diagnostic workup.



5



Be a role model and break the stigma.

- Talk to your peers about the importance of colorectal cancer screening. Peer-to-peer leadership can be extremely effective. Talk to other business leaders and convince them to support 80% in Every Community.
- Break the stigma! Share your colorectal cancer screening story with your employees, colleagues, family, and friends. Encourage employees to talk with their family and friends ages 45 and older, too.

Colorectal Cancer Screening Employer Initiatives: Stories of Success



AT&T

As a large employer, AT&T provides access to health care to almost one million employees, retirees and their family members. Starting in 2016, AT&T partnered with the American Cancer Society to deliver colorectal cancer screening education to employees. AT&T then signed the 80% Pledge in 2017, becoming one of the largest organizations to make a commitment to the 80% goal. The following year, AT&T hosted a series of weekly awareness videos featuring Dak Prescott, NFL quarterback of the Dallas Cowboys, to encourage employees to get screened. They also featured employee testimonials to bring the day-to-day story of colorectal cancer to life. Colorectal cancer screening among AT&T's U.S.-based employees increased eight percentage points between 2016 and 2018.

AT&T was an honoree recipient of the NCCRT's 2019 80% in Every Community National Achievement Award. View this [blog interview](#) with a leader at AT&T.

The University of Alabama at Birmingham

The University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) is the state of Alabama's largest employer and an internationally renowned research university and academic medical center. In 2016, UAB Medicine and UAB Employee Wellness began partnering with the American Cancer Society to increase colorectal cancer screening and awareness among the university's 23,000 employees.

As a result, colorectal cancer screening among UAB employees enrolled in a medical plan increased from 54% in 2014 to 68% in 2019.

UAB was the grand prize recipient of the [NCCRT's 2020 80% in Every Community National Achievement Award](#). Watch a [video](#) featuring interviews with leaders at UAB.

You have the power to help your employees and their families reduce their risk of colorectal cancer!

Visit [cancer.org/colon](https://www.cancer.org/colon) or [nccrt.org](https://www.nccrt.org) to learn more about how to act on the preceding recommendations and be part of 80% in Every Community.

Sources

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