



## Colorectal Cancer: Understanding, Prevention, and Treatment

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### INTRODUCTION

Colorectal cancer, a malignancy that affects the colon or rectum, is a significant global health concern. It ranks among the most common cancers worldwide, with a considerable impact on morbidity and mortality rates. However, advancements in medical science have led to improved understanding, early detection, and effective treatment strategies that offer hope in the fight against this formidable disease. Colorectal cancer begins as abnormal growths, called polyps, on the inner lining of the colon or rectum. While most polyps are benign, some can develop into cancer over time. There are two primary types of colorectal cancer. Colon Cancer: This type originates in the colon, the large intestine's first several feet. It usually starts as a noncancerous polyp and slowly progresses to cancer if left untreated. Rectal Cancer: Developing in the last six inches of the colon, rectal cancer exhibits similar characteristics to colon cancer, but due to its location, it may require distinct treatment approaches. Several risk factors contribute to the development of colorectal cancer: The risk increases with age, typically affecting individuals over 50, although cases among younger individuals have been rising. A family history of colorectal cancer or certain genetic syndromes can elevate the risk. Sedentary lifestyles, diets high in red or processed meats, obesity, smoking, and excessive alcohol consumption are associated with a higher risk. Conditions like Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis can heighten the risk. People with type 2 diabetes are more susceptible. Specific gene mutations can predispose individuals to colorectal cancer. Colorectal cancer is often preventable or, at least, manageable when detected early. Several strategies can significantly reduce the risk: Regular screenings, including colonoscopies, are essential for early detection [1,2].

### DESCRIPTION

They can identify polyps or cancers at an early stage when treatment is most effective. Maintaining a balanced diet rich in fibre, fruits, and vegetables while minimizing red and processed meats can reduce risk. Regular physical activity and avoiding smoking and excessive alcohol consumption are also

crucial. Some studies suggest that long-term, low-dose aspirin use might help lower the risk of colorectal cancer, but this should only be considered after consulting a healthcare professional. The treatment approach for colorectal cancer depends on various factors, including the cancer's stage, location, and the patient's overall health. Common treatment modalities include: Surgical removal of the tumour and nearby lymph nodes is a standard approach. In some cases, minimally invasive techniques can be employed. It involves the use of drugs to target and kill cancer cells. It can be used before or after surgery, depending on the cancer's stage. This treatment uses high doses of radiation to destroy cancer cells or shrink tumours before surgery. These drugs target specific molecules involved in cancer growth and progression. This innovative approach boosts the body's immune system to recognize and attack cancer cells [3,4].

### CONCLUSION

Colorectal cancer remains a significant health challenge, but increasing awareness, regular screenings, and adopting a healthy lifestyle can go a long way in reducing its impact. Advances in medical research continue to provide hope for improved treatment options and outcomes. By understanding the risk factors, early detection methods, and available treatments, individuals can take proactive steps in the fight against colorectal cancer. Remember, timely action and a well-informed approach is key to overcoming this disease.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

None.

### CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None.

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