

# TALKING WITH YOUR HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL ABOUT COLORECTAL CANCER

**C**olorectal screening tests save lives. These tests not only detect colorectal cancer early, but can **prevent** colorectal cancer. Screening tests can find non-cancerous polyps (grape-like growths on the lining of the colon or rectum). Removing these polyps can prevent colorectal cancer from ever occurring. When you turn 50 years old, or younger if you are at higher risk, you need to talk with your health care professional about colorectal cancer. If you are not satisfied with the responses you hear, talk to another health care professional. Here are some questions to help you begin this important conversation:

- 1** I just turned 50 years old. Should I be tested for colorectal polyps or colorectal cancer?
- 2** I don't have any family history of colorectal cancer or of colorectal polyps. Should I still be tested?
- 3** Or ... My medical history and/or my family medical history put me at an increased risk for colorectal cancer; should I be tested at a younger age and more often?
- 4** I understand there are a number of screening tests available; would you tell me about each of these tests and the risks and benefits?
- 5** I don't know which screening test is appropriate for me now. Which test do you recommend and why?
- 6** Will you perform the test? If not, who will?
- 7** Will I be awake or asleep during the test?
- 8** What will happen during the test?
- 9** Will the test hurt?
- 10** How will I learn the results of the test?
- 11** What kind of follow-up care will I need if the tests show a problem?
- 12** If the tests show nothing wrong, when should I be tested again?
- 13** What is the cost of these tests? Will my insurance cover the cost?



*March is National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month, founded by the Cancer Research and Prevention Foundation in collaboration with many partner organizations. Colorectal cancer is preventable, and is easy to treat and often curable when detected early. Talk with your health care professional about colorectal cancer today.*

**To learn more, visit our Web site at [www.preventcancer.org/colorectal](http://www.preventcancer.org/colorectal)**