

# Nurse's Notes

from your UnitedHealthcare Health Engagement Nurse

## Prevent Colon Cancer with Screenings

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With the exception of skin cancers, colorectal cancer is the third most diagnosed cancer in both men and women. It's also the second leading cause of cancer death of men and women combined. While colorectal cancer is often considered something only older people get, it is actually affecting more and more young adults. Colorectal cancer rates for people under age 50 have increased 2% each year since 1990.

The United States Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) has lowered the colorectal cancer screening age to 45. This means all people at average risk should start screening for colorectal cancer at age 45. People at higher risk may need to be screened earlier according to their risk factors.

With more people screened earlier, we can prevent more cancer and save lives. Screening helps to find growths (polyps) inside the colon. Most colorectal cancers begin as a small non-cancerous polyp. These growths can take up to 10-15 years to become cancer. Not all polyps will become colorectal cancer, but many do. The good news is that during a colonoscopy, polyps can be found and removed which can prevent a possible cancer diagnosis.

Colorectal cancers often don't produce symptoms until later stages, so on-time screening is essential. Please talk with your doctor to find out which screening method is best for you and when you should be screened.

Your UnitedHealthcare Health Engagement Nurse is available to help you and your family with many healthcare situations such as finding a primary care physician, support and education for disease prevention and management, and helping you achieve your personal health goals. See below for more information about Nurse Therese and how you can contact her!

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