

# MYTHS ON

# COLORECTAL CANCER

## MYTH 1

Colorectal Cancer is a man's disease.

**FACT:** Colorectal cancer is just as common in women as it is in men. For men, it is the no. 1 diagnosed cancer and 2<sup>nd</sup> cancer killer. For women, it is the no. 2 diagnosed cancer and 3<sup>rd</sup> cancer killer.



**No.1** diagnosed cancer  
**2<sup>ND</sup>** cancer killer



**No.2** diagnosed cancer  
**3<sup>RD</sup>** cancer killer

## MYTH 2

Colorectal Cancer is not preventable.

**FACT:** It is highly preventable through regular cancer screenings and leading a healthy lifestyle.

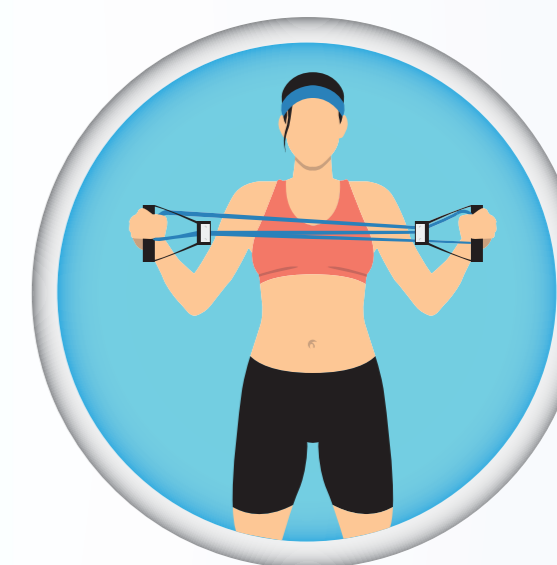
### Screenings for colorectal cancer

**Faecal Immunochemical Test (FIT):** A test to detect blood in the stool, often a possible sign of pre-colorectal cancer (*recommended annually*)

**Colonoscopy:** A scope into the anus to detect cancer and remove polyps which if left unchecked may become cancerous (*recommended once every 10 years*)

### Get into a healthy lifestyle to reduce your risk

- Eat a rainbow of fruits and vegetables regularly
- Reduce intake of red and processed meats
- Exercise regularly to maintain a healthy weight
- Avoid smoking
- Drink alcohol in moderation



## MYTH 3

Age does not matter when it comes to Colorectal Cancer.

**FACT:** Colorectal cancer is most commonly diagnosed in men and women who are 50 years old and above. Screening regularly for colorectal cancer should begin when you're 50.

**If you have a family history of colorectal cancer, you are at a higher risk. Screening for colorectal cancer should begin when you are younger. Please talk to your doctor about when to begin and how often you should undergo colorectal cancer screenings.**



## MYTH 4

Colorectal Cancer is a deadly disease and is incurable.

**FACT:** If detected early as a small localised cancer and not yet spread, ie, in Stage I and II, it is a highly treatable disease. The survival rate for patients who were diagnosed in an early stage is high.

### Age-standardised relative survival of colon and rectal cancer by stage

#### Males

Stage	5yr Age-standardised Relative Survival (%)	
	Colon Cancer	Rectal Cancer
I	98.9	104.0
II	84.6	74.2
III	71.0	52.4
IV	10.3	11.8

#### Females

Stage	5yr Age-standardised Relative Survival (%)	
	Colon Cancer	Rectal Cancer
I	94.1	103.3
II	89.2	85.2
III	64.5	71.9
IV	9.9	15.9

Age-standardised relative survival is defined as the ratio of observed survival of the patients with the expected survival of a comparable group in the general population. It reflects the chances of surviving assuming that cancer is the only possible cause of death.

**Source:**

1. American Cancer Society, [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)
2. Singapore Cancer Registry, Interim Annual Report, Trends in Cancer Incidence in Singapore, 2010-2014
3. Singapore Cancer Registry, Cancer Survival in Singapore 1973-2012