



Gastroenterology Associates, PC

Where caring for our patients is our #1 priority!

COLORECTAL POLYPS are growths found in the lining of the colon or rectum. It is believed that most colorectal cancers start as a small colorectal polyp known as an adenoma.

What causes polyps to form is uncertain. Genetic factors may determine a person's susceptibility to colorectal cancer, whereas dietary and other lifestyles factors may determine which at-risk individuals develop polyps.

Most polyps produce no symptoms. However, when they do, the most common symptom is rectal bleeding and may be manifested as visible red blood or as blood hidden in the stool detected by stool testing. A large polyp can cause cramps, abdominal pain and obstruction.

There are no foods that directly cause colorectal cancer. However, studies have identified associations that may affect an individual's risk of developing colorectal cancer or polyps. Studies have also shown that getting an adequate amount of calcium and vitamin D in their diet or from supplements can reduce the risk of colorectal cancer. Although few studies have been able to show definitively that modifying lifestyle reduces the risk of colorectal polyp or cancers, lifestyle changes such as reducing dietary fat, increasing intake of fruits and vegetables, ensuring adequate vitamins and exercise, will help improve your general health.

Colorectal polyps are diagnosed by evaluation of the inside of the colon and rectum. A colonoscopy is a test that allows examination of the large intestine using a flexible tube that is equipped with a camera that visualizes the intestinal wall. A colonoscopy is the only screening method that is both diagnostic and therapeutic.

If a polyp is found during a colonoscopy, the physician performing the procedure will most likely take a tissue sample or entirely remove the polyp during the same examination.

Doctors recommend removing all polyps from the large intestines and rectum because of the potential of some polyps becoming cancerous.

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COLORECTAL POLYPS

What causes polyps to form?

What causes polyps to form is uncertain, but genetic and lifestyle factors appear to contribute to polyp development. Diets high in fat and low in fruits and vegetables may increase the risk of polyps. Lifestyle factors such as cigarette smoking, excessive alcohol consumption, obesity and a sedentary lifestyle may also increase risk. Some polyps are the result of fairly rare hereditary conditions.

Call one of our
offices today to
schedule your
Screening
Colonoscopy!

Gainesville (571) 248-0653

Manassas (703) 368-6819

Warrenton (540) 347-2470

*This information was
obtained from ASGE.*



Audra Ballash, PA-C



Gastroenterology Associates is excited to introduce our new Physician Assistant Audra.

She was born and raised in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. She attended Pennsylvania State University and received her Bachelor of Science degree in Biology. She then received her Master of Physician Assistant Studies from Chatham University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Audra has a special interest in patient education and helping patients enjoy a higher quality of life. In her spare time, Audra enjoys running and spending time with her friends and family.



MARCH IS COLON CANCER SCREENING MONTH!!!

Colorectal cancer is the #2 cancer killer in the United States, yet it is one of the most preventable types of cancer.

Early detection is **vital**, over **80%** of all cases of colorectal cancer can be prevented with recommended screening.

Colorectal cancer usually starts from polyps in the colon or rectum. A polyp is a growth that shouldn't be there. Over time, some polyps can turn into cancer. Screening tests can find polyps, so they can be removed before they turn into cancer. Screening tests can also find colorectal cancer early. When it is found early, the chance of being cured is good.

PROFESSIONAL GUIDELINES emphasize the importance of a regular screening which includes annual fecal occult blood tests, periodic partial or full colon exams, or both. Leaders in the field have estimated that, with widespread adoption of these screening practices, as many as 30,000 lives could be saved each year.

ACG recommends screening colons as follows:

African Americans begin screening at age 45.

Screenings at age 50, unless you have a family history in that case you may need an earlier screening.

Consult your physician for recommendation.

If you are interested in getting a screening colonoscopy, please talk to a Staff Member today to find out how you can get scheduled for this life saving test.

BILLING

January is the start of calendar year deductibles. Remember to bring updated/new insurance cards in for verification.

If this is a new benefit year for you, be prepared for higher co-pays assessed by insurance carriers and the need to meet your deductible for 2018.

If you are given any kind of order for tests or procedures, it is advisable for you to contact your insurance company for coverage/benefits. This is due to the large number of individualized plans.

It is important that you call your insurance company to double check benefit information for accuracy as well as any additional charges that may apply, such as co-pays, or deductibles.