

# Early detection of colon cancer in men

by flexible sigmoidoscopy

The numbers below are averages for men over 50 years\*\* of age who either did or did not participate in a screening examination by flexible sigmoidoscopy (examination of the rectum and lower colon) over the course of ten years.

	1,000 men who did not participate in screening	1,000 men who participated in screening
<b>Benefits</b>		
How many men died of colon cancer?	5	3
How many men were diagnosed with advanced colon cancer?*	17	13
<b>Harms</b>		
During the examination, how many men experienced moderate to severe pain?	-	200
How many men experienced severe complications (such as injuries to or bleeding of the colon?)	-	fewer than 1

\*A diagnosis of colon cancer can be prevented through the removal of precancerous lesions (polyps) during the screening examination. \*\*The numbers concerning harms refer to averages reported in studies including both men and women.

**Short summary:** The flexible sigmoidoscopy reduced the number of men who died from colon cancer by 2 out of every 1,000 men. Some men experienced moderate to severe pain and, in rare cases, complications from the procedure.

Sources: [1] Holme et al. BMJ 2017;356:i6673 [2] Fitzpatrick-Lewis et al. Clin Colorectal Cancer 2016;15(4):298-313. [3] Atkin et al. Lancet 2002;359(9314):1291-300.