

# PICKING THE RIGHT TEST

## COLON CANCER SCREENING OPTIONS

Colon cancer is highly preventable and treatable. In 2021, it is estimated that 150,000 people will be diagnosed with, and 53,000 people will die from colorectal cancer in the United States. The key to improving these statistics is to ensure that every person completes a routine colon cancer screening test, which can stop the disease before it starts. The following graphic compares the two most popular screening tests available. *Digestive Health Specialists physicians recommend patients have a colonoscopy.*



### COLONOSCOPY

### COLOGUARD

#### WHAT IS IT?

During the exam, the patient is sedated and a specially trained doctor guides a light and camera through the entire length of the colon. The exam looks for any polyps and signs of cancer growth.

A stool sample is collected by the patient and sent to a lab for testing, which looks for blood or DNA markers associated with colorectal cancer

#### HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

Varies by insurance. SCREENING TEST must be covered, and are less expensive than DIAGNOSTIC tests.

Varies by insurance. Some plans cover the test, but others do not.

#### FREQUENCY



Every 10 years, if normal



Every 3 years, if normal

#### WHERE IS IT PERFORMED?

Outpatient surgical center or hospital



Patient's home



#### RISKS OR NEGATIVES

Complications are rare, but include bleeding, infection, and bowel wall injury.

No physical risks. A positive test, which includes a false positive (13% of the time), means that a **diagnostic colonoscopy** is required. A false negative occurs 8% of the time.

#### GOOD CANDIDATE

Most people are good candidates. This test is the best way to find and remove polyps early. It is the only option for patients with a personal or family history of colon cancer or polyps.

Average risk patient **only**. Colonoscopy is the recommended screening test at Digestive Health Specialists unless discussed with your gastroenterologist.