

COLORECTAL CANCER

(a colorectal carcinoma) is one of the most frequently occurring malignant tumours. The Czech Republic regularly occupies a top spot in European and international tables of occurrences of this illness. Around 8000 people contract this illness here every year and more than half of them die of it. Despite that, colorectal cancer is one of the most preventable tumours and it is highly treatable, if discovered in time. This timely discovery is assisted by means of a simple and accessible method: a test for occult bleeding in the stool. Despite this, one third of patients visit their doctor too late when they already have widespread metastasis.



How does colorectal cancer manifest itself?

This illness may be present in hidden form for a long time without any symptoms. If you have any of the following symptoms, it is advisable for you to visit your GP or a specialist (a gastroenterologist) as soon as possible.

The most frequent symptoms of colorectal cancer:

- bleeding in the stool
- difficult evacuation
- a stool which is thinner on average than usual
- alternating constipation and diarrhoea
- stomach pain
- wind and difficulty in releasing the accumulated wind
- weight loss without any apparent cause
- anaemia and increased tiredness

Who is most at risk from colorectal cancer?

Especially people who:

- are over 50
- smoke
- are obese
- have a close relative (parents, siblings, etc.) in whom this illness has been diagnosed
- have diabetes mellitus
- eat red meat (pork, beef, mutton) more than 5x a week
- have insufficient intake of fresh fruit and vegetables
- have insufficient intake of dairy products and calcium
- have a sedentary lifestyle with insufficient movement

Over 80% of all tumours of the colon arise as a consequence of the interaction of several factors from an unhealthy lifestyle.

How can I protect myself against colorectal cancer?

- regularly consume fish and fish oil
- regularly consume dairy products and calcium
- regularly consume fruit and vegetables (the recommended amount is 5 portions/day; > 400 g)
- get regular movement (at least 30 min a day), even light physical activity such as walking is beneficial

How does the tumour occur?

Most tumours of the colon and rectum arise from a so-called adenomatous polyp, which is a benign growth on the intestine wall. Its transformation into a tumour takes 7–10 years. It is possible to discover these growths at any time and to remove them without the need for an operation (endoscopically). A screening program has been set up in the Czech Republic in order to

ensure the timely discovery of any such changes in the colon. It is free of charge for all individuals over 50

- If you are aged 50–54, you should have yourself tested once a year for occult bleeding in the stool
- if are you older than 55, you can choose between:
 - testing your stool for occult bleeding once every two years
 - a colonoscopy once every 10 years

The test for occult bleeding is available free from your GP or women can get it from their gynaecologist. Colonoscopic examinations are undertaken at specialised gastroenterology departments. The test for occult bleeding in the stool is simple. You simply take a small stool sample at home using the provided spatula and then either apply it to the designated area on the test card or place it in a test tube containing a special solution. Then take the test back to your doctor who will evaluate it. It is also possible to purchase a test from a pharmacy which you can evaluate at home by yourself. Some health insurance companies contribute to the cost within the framework of their preventative programs. A positive test result does not mean that you have colon cancer. A further examination is necessary in order to confirm any such diagnosis.

Thanks to the efforts of the Dagmar and Václav Havel VIZE 97 Foundation, all citizens in the Czech Republic now have the option of taking a free test for occult bleeding in the stool. Request this test from your doctor!

The Dagmar and Václav Havel VIZE 97 Foundation has been providing education about colorectal cancer since 1998. It has done so by informing the public about the option of pain-free testing. The Czech Republic has long held a sad primacy in the numbers of deaths caused by this insidious disease. Thanks to the approach and efforts of Mrs Dagmar Havlová, funds of

around 300 million Crowns have been collected in recent years to help in the fight against this disease. This money has been used to equip endoscopic examination rooms throughout the entire Czech Republic with new medical equipment. Thanks to the VIZE 97 Foundation, everybody over the age of 50 has an occult bleeding test fully covered by health insurance once a year. By means of these activities, the Foundation has contributed to a fall in the number of deaths of patients caused by this danger illness and we have currently dropped to 5th place in the world.

„Don't wait until you or your loved ones fall ill“

Hlavní mediální partner



Více info na: www.vize.cz



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DAGMAR A VÁCLAV HAVLOVÝCH
VIZE 97

Take care of your health:
The timely diagnosis and prevention of colorectal cancer

A project of the Dagmar and Václav Havel VIZE 97 Foundation
with the support of specialists from
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