

Special Bulletin

For professional providers

February 28, 2023

March Is Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month – Screenings Essential

Colorectal cancer is the fourth leading cause of cancer-related deaths, according to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#).

Screenings are Essential

The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) recommends all adults be screened for colorectal cancer starting at age 45. Individuals at an elevated risk — whether due to lifestyle factors and/or family history — may necessitate earlier or more frequent screening.

The U.S. Multi-Society Task Force has classified the various colorectal cancer screening modalities based on performance and effectiveness.¹ Colonoscopy and annual fecal immunochemical test (FIT) are both classified as tier-1 screening recommendations.

Highmark Preventive Health Guidelines

Preventive Health Guidelines for Highmark BlueShield of Northeastern New York (BSNENY) providers include colorectal cancer screenings for eligible members. Please note that most, although not all, of our employer groups follow the Highmark Preventive Schedule. Therefore, not all Highmark BSNENY members may have coverage for services on the preventive schedule.

To access the Preventive Health Guidelines, go to the **Provider Resource Center > EDUCATION/MANUALS > Preventive Health Guidelines**.

References

¹ *Colorectal Cancer Screening: Recommendations for Physicians and Patients From the U.S. Multi-Society Task Force on Colorectal Cancer. AJG 2017;112(7):1016-1030. doi:10.1038/ajg.2017.174*

Highmark Blue Shield of Northeastern New York and BlueShield of Northeastern New York are trade names of Highmark Western and Northeastern New York Inc., an independent licensee of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association.

Highmark does not recommend particular treatments or health care services. This information is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. You should determine the appropriate treatment and follow-up with your patient. Coverage of services is subject to the terms of each member's benefit plan. Additionally, state laws and regulations governing health insurance, health plans and coverage may apply and will vary from state to state.