

# Colorectal Screenings and Masculinity Issues

Manly barriers and promising access via mail-in tests

March 13, 2023 By [Trent Straube](#)

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Early screening is one of the best ways to reduce colorectal cancer rates and death. But a recent study found that men who embrace traditional ideals of masculinity and gender norms were less likely to get screened or ask for help, which was perceived as a weakness. The study, led by Charles Rogers, PhD, MPH, of the University of Utah, also found lower screening rates among men with negative attitudes toward the medical profession. Addressing these psychosocial issues, they wrote, would help lower health disparities among racial and ethnic groups.

Since about 2019, the recommended age for starting colorectal screenings has dropped from 50 to 45. Data comparing colonoscopies between October 2017 and August 2021 found a modest increase in screening of younger people but that first-time colonoscopies were mostly performed among 50- to 54-year-olds.

But there's an easier, faster and cheaper way to get screened: fecal tests that involve mailing in a stool sample. A recent survey found that most Americans preferred a regular fecal immunochemical test (FIT), every one to three years over a colonoscopy every 10 years.

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