Alberta Colorectal Cancer Screening Program (ACRCSP)

Does my Patient Need a Fecal Immunochemical Test (FIT)?

October 2026

Does your patient have...

Symptoms of:
- Anemia
- Rectal Bleeding
- Abdominal Pain
- Changed Bowel Habits

→ **FIT is not recommended.**
Refer for consideration of endoscopic evaluation after initial investigations.

Inflammatory Bowel Disease:
- Crohn's
- Ulcerative Colitis

→ **FIT is not recommended.**
Refer for **colonoscopy**.

Previous polyp in colon or rectum?

→ **FIT is not recommended.**
Refer to endoscopist or program to determine appropriate interval for next **colonoscopy**.

Family history of colorectal cancer in:
- Brother or Sister
- Child
- Parent

More than one first degree relative is affected. → **FIT is not recommended.**
Refer for **colonoscopy** at age 40, or 10 years prior to index case, whichever is first.

A first degree relative was 60 or younger when diagnosed. → **FIT is not recommended.**
Refer for **colonoscopy** at age 40, or 10 years prior to index case, whichever is first.

A first degree relative affected, who was older than 60 when diagnosed. → **Screen with FIT every 1-2 years starting at age 40.** Refer for colonoscopy if result is positive.

If NO to all of the above...

Did the patient have a normal...
- FIT within 1 year
- Colonoscopy within 10 years
- Flexible Sigmoidoscopy or Virtual Colonoscopy within 5 years

→ **FIT is not recommended.**
Patient is up to date with colorectal cancer screening.

No previous screening
Patient has never been screened for colorectal cancer, or screening interval has elapsed.

→ **How old is the patient?**

- younger than 40 / older than 84 → **FIT will be rejected at the lab (starting first quarter of 2015).** Screening is not recommended for these age groups.
- between 40-49 / between 75-84 → **FIT is generally not recommended.** Individually assess risk and quality of life. Harm can outweigh benefit; use clinical judgment.
- between 50-74 → **Screen with FIT every 1-2 years.** If FIT is positive or if family history changes, refer to colonoscopy.

For additional information about the Alberta Colorectal Cancer Screening Program and details visit **screeningforlife.ca**

Primary Care Alberta