

cologuard stool test



Is this the test for you?

Pros:

1. **Simple** non-invasive at-home stool collection widely advertised on TV.
 2. **Good at excluding** colon cancer. If results are normal, 92% chance that you do not have colon cancer.
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Cons:

1. **Not designed to prevent colon cancer.** Cologuard looks for colon cancer DNA in stool AFTER you get cancer. We have had a very accurate test to prevent colon cancer for 50 years - screening colonoscopy. Find and remove a polyp... prevent a cancer. Cologuard is *not* a test to find colon polyps before they turn to cancer. By the time this test is abnormal, you may already have a cancer that could have been prevented. It may be too late for cure even with surgery and chemo.
2. **Less sensitive for cancer than high quality colonoscopy.**
3. **High false positive rate.** Most of the patients we have seen with abnormal Cologuard do *not* have cancer. False positive rate increases with patient age. Test includes a non-specific stool FIT test for blood in stool, but they will not report this separately. Most of the sensitivity of this test comes from the FIT test which is a fraction of the cost.
4. **Only for average risk individuals.** Not approved or covered for those who have already had colon polyps or have a family history of colon cancer or polyps.
5. If your Cologuard test is abnormal, you will still need to have a colonoscopy. But, now your health insurance will consider this to be a **DIAGNOSTIC colonoscopy not a SCREENING colonoscopy.** You may have to pay the full deductible and copay for colonoscopy.
6. **\$500 dollar stool test** - most insurance plans cover but someone is paying for this. We all are.