

## Myth breaker: Dashing 5 misconceptions of colonoscopies

For many people, colonoscopies and other colorectal cancer screenings can be intimidating. It's something that not many people talk about and those unknowns can make it feel embarrassing. We've broken down the top five myths of colonoscopies so we can set the record straight and you can overcome any fear and get screened.

### 1. Risk

**MYTH:** I have no family history and no symptoms so I don't need to get screened. **FACT:** 75 percent of colorectal cancers occur in people with no known risk factors or family history.

### 2. Cost

**MYTH:** Colonoscopies and other screenings are expensive.

**FACT:** Colorectal cancer screenings are covered as a preventive health benefit through most insurance companies including Sanford Health Plan. If you are 50 and older, your screening is covered. Sanford Health Plan members can log into their secure mySanfordHealthPlan accounts to view plan documents or call customer service at (800) 752-5863 for more information.

### 3. Pain

**MYTH:** Screening is difficult and painful.

**FACT:** There are many different screenings available and none of them should be painful. There are at home tests that require no special preparation or dietary restrictions at all. You collect a stool sample at home and mail it back. It's that easy. If you and your doctor decide a colonoscopy is the best screening choice for you, you will need to complete the bowel preparation step but it shouldn't be painful. You will be sedated during the actual procedure to keep you comfortable.

### 4. Too busy

**MYTH:** It is too hard to find the time to take off work and find a ride home.

**FACT:** The new home testing kits require you to take no time off and no special prep. If you and your doctor decide that a colonoscopy is the best screening for you, talk to your doctor about scheduling it at a time that is best for you. Use the weekend, holidays or other scheduled days off to minimize the inconvenience. You can go back to work the next day.

### 5. Embarrassing

**MYTH:** It's too embarrassing to talk about it with my doctor.

**FACT:** It is important to take charge of your health and well-being. Caring about your health and future is nothing to be embarrassed about. Your doctor is a professional and will not judge. They want you to be healthy, too.