



FIRE DEPARTMENT

The City of New York

Bureau of Health Services

WORLD TRADE CENTER HEALTH PROGRAM

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Colonoscopy – A New FDNY WTC Screening Benefit at NO Cost to You

You are receiving this invitation because you are an FDNY uniformed member (FIRE or EMS; active or retired) who enrolled in the FDNY WTC Health program after participation in the World Trade Center rescue and recovery effort. As you are aware, the WTC Health Program continuously monitors the health status of our enrolled members, especially for the development of specific cancers, such as colon and rectal cancer.

Colonoscopy can prevent colorectal cancer or can lead to successful treatment through early diagnosis. The FDNY WTC Health Program is providing screening colonoscopy at no charge to you and with no effect on your duty status. Only enrolled members receiving this letter by mail are eligible for this free benefit. Authorizations for this procedure are required and will be provided at your annual exam for active members or at your WTC monitoring exam for retirees. If your monitoring exam is delinquent, you should schedule a monitoring appointment. If you had a monitoring exam within the past 11 months, you should schedule a treatment visit to obtain authorization.

What is a Colonoscopy?

This procedure is performed by a gastroenterologist (GI doctor) as part of an evaluation for colon and rectal cancer. It may also diagnose polyps, diverticulosis, ulcerative colitis, Crohn's disease, and hemorrhoids. Under anesthesia and sedation, a long, flexible tube (colonoscope), with a light and camera on one end, is passed through the anus to examine the inner lining of the colon (large intestine) and rectum. Biopsies (small pieces of tissue) of any abnormality may also be done directly through the colonoscope if the GI doctor deems it necessary.

Why should I get a Screening Colonoscopy?

- A screening colonoscopy is used to prevent colorectal cancer (by removing pre-cancerous polyps) or to provide early diagnosis and thereby increase your likelihood for successful treatment.
- Even without GI symptoms, your WTC exposure may increase the possibility of later colorectal cancer.

Who should have a Screening Colonoscopy?

- All enrolled members in the FDNY WTC Health Program between ages 50 and 75 years old.
- Enrolled members at *increased risk* for colorectal cancer should begin screening at an earlier age. Please discuss this with your physician at your next annual monitoring exam

Who should not have a Screening Colonoscopy?

- Members below age 50 or above age 75 who are not at high risk (ex. no family history of colorectal cancer)
- Members who had a colonoscopy within the last 3 to 10 years (depending on the results). *Please bring the report of your last colonoscopy (including path results) with you to your next annual or monitoring exam.*

Where will the Colonoscopy be performed?

- At a private Gastroenterology Endoscopy office near your home or work.
- Colonoscopies are not done at FDNY facilities or by FDNY employees.

Three important notes for active members participating in the Screening Colonoscopy Program:

- Your participation in this voluntary program will not affect your duty status.
- While the colonoscopy may take from 30 to 60 minutes, preparation is first required to clear the colon of all stool. A liquid diet is started 24 hours prior to the test and a laxative is taken the night before.
- Once authorized, your colonoscopy is at no charge to you
- As participation is voluntary, you cannot be paid or receive any salary compensation for your time spent preparing for, or obtaining this examination.