

Mayo Clinic Minute

How a colonoscopy can prevent colorectal cancer

VIDEO	AUDIO
	While you might get hung up on the prep for a colonoscopy ...
Michael Wallace, M.D.	"The hard part for most people is clearing out their intestines."
	... Mayo Clinic gastroenterologist Dr. Michael Wallace says the focus should be on the protection this procedure offers.
Michael Wallace, M.D. Graphic: 1 in 20 Americans	"About 1 in 20 individuals in the United States will be diagnosed with colorectal cancer in their life."
Title: Michael Wallace, M.D. Gastroenterology Mayo Clinic	"We have the technology right now to prevent colorectal cancer. And we just need to make sure that everybody is coming in to get screened for it."
Graphic: Screening In general: Age 50 Family history: Earlier	Dr. Wallace says everyone should be screened starting at the age of 50, and earlier if there is a family history of the disease.
	<i>Sound of a colonoscope being used</i>
Michael Wallace, M.D.	"A colonoscopy is literally examination of the colon."
	While you're sedated, a doctor uses a colonoscope to check for polyps.
Michael Wallace, M.D.	"And when we find a polyp, which is a precursor to cancer ..."
Michael Wallace, M.D.	"... we can go in and remove that polyp before it ever becomes malignant."
	And that makes a colonoscopy more than an early detection tool.
Michael Wallace, M.D.	"It's actually prevention."

Graphic:
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For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I'm Jeff Olsen.