

Comparison Guide to Colon, Rectal + Anal Cancers



Colon Cancer

Location

Any part of the colon

Causes

DNA mutations; family history; inflammatory bowel disease; high-fat diet; smoking

Symptoms

Diarrhea or constipation; blood in stool; abdominal pain; bloating; unexplained weight loss; fatigue

Screening

Colonoscopy; cologuard; sigmoidoscopy

Treatment options

Surgery, chemotherapy, immunotherapy

Rectal Cancer

Location

In the rectum, which sits above the anal canal

Causes

DNA mutations; family history; inflammatory bowel disease; high-fat diet; smoking

Symptoms

Diarrhea or constipation; blood in stool; abdominal pain; bloating; unexplained weight loss; fatigue

Screening

Colonoscopy; cologuard; sigmoidoscopy

Treatment options

Chemotherapy, radiation therapy, surgery, immunotherapy

Anal Cancer

Location

Within and around the anal canal

Causes

HPV infection; smoking; multiple sexual partners; receptive anal sex

Symptoms

Anal or rectal bleeding; pain in anus; mass in the anal canal; anal itching; changes in bowel movements

Screening

Digital rectal exam; anoscopy

Treatment options

Chemoradiation, surgery, immunotherapy