



Health Index  
for Employers™



# Cancer Screening and Prevention

Domain Solutions



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# The Importance of Cancer Screening and Prevention

Cancer screening is the process of looking for cancer in people who have no symptoms. Regular screening increases the chance of preventing some cancers and detecting certain cancers early when they might be easier to treat. In some cases, screening allows for the removal of precancerous lesions, and screening is known to help reduce mortality for breast, colon, rectum, cervix, prostate, and lung cancers. <sup>(1)</sup> Regular, age-appropriate screening recommendations for average-risk adults have been developed by the American Cancer Society for breast, cervical, and colorectal cancer. Additionally, the American Cancer Society has developed recommendations based on age and risk for prostate and lung cancer that can help guide doctors and their patients to make decisions about screening. <sup>(2)</sup>

Along with developing evidence-based cancer screening guidelines, the American Cancer Society promotes their use, and employers are encouraged to adopt these guidelines. The *U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF)* also develops evidence-based cancer screening guidelines. Although recommendations made by the American Cancer Society and the USPSTF are similar, not all recommendations are identical because of different interpretations of the existing evidence. The American Cancer Society provides an annual report that summarizes their current cancer screening guidelines, including current recommendations, updates, and guidance related to early cancer detection when a direct recommendation for screening cannot be made. <sup>(2)</sup>

According to the *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*, about 1 in 5 women are not current with cervical cancer screening, 1 in 4 women are not current with breast cancer screening, and about 1 in 3 adults are not current with colorectal cancer screening. <sup>(3)</sup> You can find information here about the [American Cancer Society's recommendations for the prevention and early detection of cancer](#).

Certain cancers can also be prevented with the human papillomavirus, or HPV, vaccine. HPV can cause six types of cancer. <sup>(4)</sup> <sup>(5)</sup> The virus is so common that it will infect most people at some point in their lifetime. Most infections clear on their own without lasting health effects.



However, there is no way to know if an infection will lead to cancer. [The American Cancer Society has developed recommendations for HPV vaccine use.](#)

## The ACS Brand Toolkit Resource

The American Cancer Society provides a brand toolkit resource that contains a variety of useful resources that are referenced in the **American Cancer Society Health Index for Employers™** documents. To access the resources:

- Login to <https://brandtoolkit.cancer.org>
- Read the welcome message from the rotating carousel.
- Then click the home icon at the top left corner of the page, focus on the quick links on the left of the page, and select the folder or topic that you wish to explore.



## Evidence-Based Practice 1: Health Insurance Coverage for Cancer Screening

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, which is more commonly known as the Affordable Care Act (ACA), requires cancer screening coverage at no cost to patients for all marketplace health plans as well as some other plans. Insurance providers must cover approved preventive colorectal cancer screening for all adults and breast and cervical cancer screening for women without charging a [copayment](#) or [coinsurance](#) whether or not people have met their yearly [deductible](#). However, for screening tests that have abnormal results, some follow-up tests may be considered diagnostic, and cost to the patient may be incurred as a result. Some grandfathered health plans may not offer all preventive screening tests and may not waive cost-sharing for those they do offer. Grandfathered health plans are those that were in place before the ACA became law, and these plans may not include some benefits that are required for non-grandfathered plans. It is important to find out if your company offers any grandfathered plans and understand the extent of cancer screening coverage.<sup>(6)</sup>

By setting worksite screening goals, leveraging health plan benefits, promoting coverage of recommended cancer screening tests, and monitoring screening rates for employees, employers can help ensure they are supporting optimal health and productivity of their workforce and covered dependents. During the contracting process with your insurance providers, you can negotiate no-cost screening and waive additional copays.

### Implementation Options

**Provide access to no-cost cancer screening.** Provide your employees with access to preventive breast cancer, cervical cancer, and colorectal cancer screening with no out-of-pocket costs through your insurance plans.<sup>(2)</sup> No out-of-pocket costs mean patients pay no deductibles, copayments, or coinsurance.

Insurance issues can become complex in some cancer screening cases, especially in high-risk individuals and those who may need follow-up testing. But employers play a critical role in engaging insurers to improve screening rates. As a corporate policy and practice, all health plans you contract with should ensure zero out-of-pocket costs for colonoscopies, even when



polyps are discovered during the procedure or a colonoscopy is needed as a follow-up to an abnormal non-colonoscopy screening.

## Tools and Resources\*

### *Tools and resources to assist employers*

- American Cancer Society Plan to Increase Cancer Screening Among Employees  
<https://brandtoolkit.cancer.org>
- How Ameren, AT&T, and Progressive Insurance Medical Clinics are increasing colorectal cancer screening rates among their employees.
  - [Webinar recording: Employer Strategies for Success](#)  
<http://ncrt.org/resource/employer-strategies-for-success/>
  - <http://ncrt.org/blog-interview-att/>
  - <http://ncrt.org/wp-content/uploads/EMPLOYERS-4-PAGER-11-2-17-FINAL.pdf>
- Paid Leave Policies for Cancer Screenings  
<http://ncrt.org/resource/paid-leave-policies-cancer-screenings/>

### *Tools and resources to assist employees*

If employees are looking for cancer screening assistance for family and friends, the CDC provides services for those without insurance.

- The CDC's [National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program](#) can provide breast and cervical cancer screening and diagnostic services to low-income, uninsured, and underinsured women. They provide information about local screening providers so that you can promote screening to all employees, not just those covered by your health plan.
- In some states, the CDC's [Colorectal Cancer Control Program](#) can provide colorectal cancer screening test services to low-income, underinsured, and uninsured men and women. They provide information about local screening providers so that you can promote screening to all employees, not just those covered by your health plan.



### ***Additional reading***

- Learn more about insurance coverage for colorectal cancer screening and the coverage your insurance plans provide to communicate effectively with your employees about screening options.  
<https://www.cancer.org/cancer/colon-rectal-cancer/detection-diagnosis-staging/screening-coverage-laws.html>.
- The Community Guide What Works Cancer Screening Fact Sheet  
<https://www.thecommunityguide.org/sites/default/files/assets/What-Works-Factsheet-CancerScreening.pdf>
- The National Colorectal Cancer Roundtable's (NCCRT) Colorectal Cancer Screening Best Practices Handbook for Health Plans features case studies of different strategies that health plans have employed to increase colorectal cancer screening rates. Learn more about what works to better negotiate with your insurers and advocate for your employees.  
<http://nccrt.org/wp-content/uploads/NCCRT-Health-Plan-Handbook-Draft-07c.pdf>

*\* Inclusion on this list does not imply endorsement by the American Cancer Society.*



## Evidence-Based Practice 2: Health Insurance Coverage for HPV Vaccination

An important aspect of building a workplace culture of health is to provide vaccinations that help ensure that children of employees will be less likely to be affected by certain types of cancer. The human papillomavirus (HPV) is an infection that can cause six types of cancer. The vaccine can help prevent more than 31,000 new cases of HPV-related cancers each year.<sup>(7)</sup>

The HPV vaccines work best when given to boys and girls at age 11 or 12 and completed by age 13 before they are exposed to the HPV virus. The vaccination series can be started at age 9. The HPV vaccination is also recommended for females 13 to 26 years of age and for males 13 to 21 years of age who did not get vaccinated on time or did not complete the series. Males 22 to 26 years of age may also be vaccinated.

### Implementation Options

**Provide access to HPV vaccination.** Provide access to the HPV vaccination at no out-of-pocket costs through your insurance plan.

Most insurance plans cover the cost of vaccines. But for the uninsured, the Vaccines for Children program covers the costs of the HPV and other vaccines for children up to age 19.

<http://www.center4research.org/vaccines-children-program-vfc/>

### Tools and Resources

#### *Tools and resources to assist employers*

- Protecting Our Children from HPV Cancers  
<https://www.cancer.org/content/dam/cancer-org/online-documents/en/pdf/flyers/protecting-our-children-from-hpv-cancers.pdf>
- HPV Vaccination: Just the Facts  
<https://www.cancer.org/content/dam/cancer-org/online-documents/en/pdf/flyers/hpv-vaccination-just-the-facts-for-parents.pdf>



***Additional reading***

- American Cancer Society Recommendations for Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Vaccine Use  
<https://www.cancer.org/cancer/cancer-causes/infectious-agents/hpv/acs-recommendations-for-hpv-vaccine-use.html>



## Evidence-Based Practice 3: Health Plan Reminders for Members

Strong evidence shows that sending reminders to people when they are due for cancer screening, such as letters, postcards, emails, or phone messages, helps to increase screening rates for breast, cervical, and colorectal cancers.<sup>(8)</sup>

The *Community Preventive Services Task Force (CPSTF)* recommended the use of patient reminders to increase screening for breast, cervical, and colorectal cancers.<sup>(8)</sup>

### Implementation Options

**Send cancer screening reminders to employees.** Work with your insurance providers to ensure they send age-appropriate reminders to employees about regular breast, cervical, and colorectal cancer screening.

### Tools and Resources\*

#### *Tools and resources to assist employers*

- American Cancer Society Plan to Increase Cancer Screening Among Employees  
<https://brandtoolkit.cancer.org>
- American Cancer Society co-brandable reminders for cancer screening and HPV vaccinations. Reminder cards are available in multiple languages here:  
<https://brandtoolkit.cancer.org>

#### *Additional reading*

- The NCCRT's Colorectal Cancer Screening Best Practices Handbook for Health Plans features case studies of different strategies that health plans have employed to increase colorectal cancer screening rates. Learn more about what works to better negotiate with your insurers and advocate for your employees.  
<http://nccrt.org/wp-content/uploads/NCCRT-Health-Plan-Handbook-Draft-07c.pdf>



- The Community Guide What Works Cancer Screening Fact Sheet  
<https://www.thecommunityguide.org/sites/default/files/assets/What-Works-Factsheet-CancerScreening.pdf>

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## Evidence-Based Practice 4: Health Plan Reminders for Providers

The goal of provider reminder and recall interventions is to increase the delivery of appropriate cancer screening services by health care providers. Provider reminders are an evidence-based intervention that is known to work.<sup>(8)</sup>

The *Community Preventive Services Task Force* recommended the use of provider reminder and recall systems based on the strong evidence of their effectiveness in increasing screening by mammography for breast cancer, by Pap test for cervical cancer, and colorectal cancer.<sup>(8)</sup>

### Implementation Options

**Send cancer screening reminders to providers.** Work with your insurance providers to ensure they encourage providers to track when employees are due for breast, cervical, and colorectal cancer screenings.

By tracking screening due dates and creating system prompts in electronic health records, providers and their staff will be alerted when a patient is due for cancer screening. Employers can also ask if the health plan offers incentives to participating network providers to encourage their patients to get timely, appropriate cancer screenings.

### Tools and Resources\*

#### *Tools and resources to assist employers*

- American Cancer Society Plan to Increase Cancer Screening Among Employees  
<https://brandtoolkit.cancer.org>
- American Cancer Society co-brandable reminders for cancer screening. Reminder cards are available in multiple languages.  
<https://brandtoolkit.cancer.org>

***Additional reading***

- The NCCRT’s Colorectal Cancer Screening Best Practices Handbook for Health Plans features case studies of different strategies that health plans have employed to increase colorectal cancer screening rates. Learn more about what works to better negotiate with your insurers and advocate for your employees.

<http://nccrt.org/wp-content/uploads/NCCRT-Health-Plan-Handbook-Draft-07c.pdf>

- The Community Guide What Works Cancer Screening Fact Sheet

<https://www.thecommunityguide.org/sites/default/files/assets/What-Works-Factsheet-CancerScreening.pdf>

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## Evidence-Based Practice 5: Screening Data from Insurers or Brokers

The measurable outcome for health promotion programs is behavior change. Tracking your yearly screening rates across breast, cervical, and colorectal cancers provides you with important feedback. <sup>(9) (10)</sup>

### Implementation Options

**Use health plan data to track your cancer screening rates.** Ask your insurer or broker to provide quarterly, or at least biannual, screening rates. You can use this data to improve your workplace wellness programs.

Since health plans track when members have had a cancer screening through claims data, the data can be used to calculate aggregate screening rates for your employee population. The screening rates can be used for benchmarking and analysis to focus on campaigns where screening rates are lower than desired.

### Tools and Resources\*

#### *Tools and resources to assist employers*

- The following webinar with Ameren, AT&T, and Progressive Insurance Medical Clinics includes information on how employers can track colorectal cancer screening rates.  
[Webinar recording: Employer Strategies for Success](http://ncrt.org/resource/employer-strategies-for-success/) <http://ncrt.org/resource/employer-strategies-for-success/>
- The following resource for employers includes suggestions on how employers can track colorectal cancer screening rates.

<http://ncrt.org/wp-content/uploads/EMPLOYERS-4-PAGER-11-2-17-FINAL.pdf>

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## Evidence-Based Practice 6: Cancer Screening Health Promotion Campaign

Health promotion campaigns are a good way to promote health messages to your employees. You can create a culture of health within your organization by conducting campaigns or hosting promotional events that focus on cancer screening for improved health. <sup>(8)</sup>

### Implementation Options

**Host promotional events and screening campaigns.** You can promote health messages in different ways to encourage your employees to get screened regularly.

Engage executive leadership to “carry the banner” and make a personal appeal. Identify champions at different levels within your organization to help reinforce executive leadership action.

If aspects of your campaign are offered in-person, be mindful of the different staff schedules to ensure all audiences can participate.

If you have employees who speak languages other than English, make sure materials are available in those languages, too.

**Sample Campaign Effort.** During Colon Cancer Awareness month in March, one company offered employees ages 50 and older an easy-to-use take-home stool test. The free test was mailed directly to their home mailing address.

The company paid for the expenses related to this screening effort for their eligible employees.

- There were 3,381 eligible participants for the screening.
- Five weeks after each mailing the collection kits, postcard reminders were sent to participants who had not returned their collection kit.
- In all, 666 kits were returned to the testing facility. Of the 666 kits returned, 53 were positive for hemoglobin in the stool. Employees with positive results received follow-up testing.

The campaign was a success, and the company will offer the test to eligible spouses in the future.



The following list includes ideas for focusing events on particular types of cancer and using different types of events to encourage participation by employees.

- Conduct annual health promotion campaigns, specifically targeting breast, cervical, or colorectal cancer screening.
- Conduct company-wide challenges and feature leadership stories that demonstrate the support to get recommended cancer screening tests.
- Use existing events such as an annual flu shot clinic to promote colorectal cancer and other annual recommended screenings. Visit [www.flufit.org](http://www.flufit.org) for great resources on how to promote fecal immunochemical tests for colorectal cancer screening with annual flu shots.
- Create a pledge card event for employees to pledge to talk to their doctors, get screened, and encourage family and friends to get screened, too.
- Engage your communication team and local media to promote your efforts and progress through electronic, social, and print media.
- Consider joining the 80% in Every Community campaign <http://nccrt.org/80-in-every-community/>. Organizations that have joined the campaign are recognized in the NCCRT Hall of Fame (among other places), and joining establishes a goal for employees.

## Tools and Resources

### *Tools and resources to assist employers*

- You can find American Cancer Society posters, flyers, newsletter content, email messages, and social media messages here: <https://brandtoolkit.cancer.org>
- Use the new Get Your Tests flyer (available in 13 languages) by the American Cancer Society as a supporting document. <https://brandtoolkit.cancer.org>
- Use the 80% By 2018 Communications Guidebook for recommended messaging to reach the unscreened for colorectal cancer.





<http://nccrt.org/resource/2017-80-2018-communications-guidebook-recommended-messaging-reach-unscreened/>

- The NCCRT has recently launched a new campaign, 80% in Every Community. However, the wide array of resources currently housed in the online resource center (<http://nccrt.org/resource-center/>) that are labeled 80% by 2018 are still very practical, current, and useful guides for improving colorectal cancer screening rates across many settings and communities. We encourage you to continue using and adapting these resources as these materials are updated to reflect the new campaign slogan over the coming months.



## Evidence-Based Practice 7: Communication with Employees

Effective communication strategies are critical for delivering information to employees about cancer screening options. (8) The frequency of messaging, as well as communicating in new and different ways, contribute to the overall worksite culture and helps to keep employees motivated. (11) (12)

Other than during open enrollment, your company should communicate with employees about cancer screening and prevention, including policies, programs, and benefits, several times a year. Communication should include easily accessible, proactive, engaging messages tailored to diverse population groups that may make up your workforce.

The CSPTF Community Guide shows that using more than one type of communication (i.e., postcards, posters, emails, texts, etc.) is the most effective. (8)

### Implementation Options

**Communicate regularly with your employees about cancer screening.** The channels you have employed that have been effective at delivering other important work-related news are the same channels that you might use to communicate about cancer screening policies and programs. Communication examples include:

- Communicate with your employees about cancer screening and prevention at least four times per year outside of the open enrollment period. Send regular email blasts or newsletters with a screening message and support of the recommended screening guidelines.
- Use open enrollment season to educate employees on covered benefits.
- Use CEO communications messages to promote colorectal cancer screening to employees.  
<http://nccrt.org/download/98698/>  
<http://nccrt.org/download/98702/>



- Post flyers, posters, and informational materials throughout your worksite. If you have employees who speak languages other than English, make sure materials are available in those languages, too.  
<https://brandtoolkit.cancer.org>
- Follow the American Cancer Society’s social media channels and share relevant cancer screening messages on your social media platforms.  
<https://twitter.com/americancancer>  
<https://www.facebook.com/AmericanCancerSociety>  
<https://www.instagram.com/americancancersociety/>
- Set up a peer-to-peer discussion group to discuss the importance of cancer screening. Peer-to-peer leadership can be extremely effective.
- Host a health fair, and educate employees on benefits and preventive care.
- Host a lunch-and-learn to raise awareness of recommended screening. Visit [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org) for breast, cervical, and colorectal cancer presentations. Consider using the new Get Your Tests flyer (available in 13 languages) by the American Cancer Society as a supporting document. <https://brandtoolkit.cancer.org>

## Tools and Resources\*

### ***Tools and resources to assist employers***

- *Make It Your Own* is a free health promotion website where you can make customized messages through an online tool to promote cancer screening to your employees to deliver in multiple modalities, including the web.  
<http://www.miyoworks.org/>

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