## Comparison of Colorectal Screening Tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Features</th>
<th>Limitations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Colonoscopy</td>
<td>Procedure takes about 30 minutes</td>
<td>Can miss small polyps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Can usually view entire colon</td>
<td>More expensive on a one-time basis than other forms of testing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Full bowel preparation needed</td>
<td>Will need someone to drive you home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sedation of some kind usually needed</td>
<td>You may miss a day of work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Can biopsy and remove polyps</td>
<td>Small risk of bleeding, bowel tears, or infection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Can diagnose other diseases</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Done every 10 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexible Sigmoidoscopy</td>
<td>Procedure takes 10-20 minutes</td>
<td>Views only about a third of the colon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fairly safe</td>
<td>Can miss small polyps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Usually doesn’t require full bowel preparation</td>
<td>Can’t remove all polyps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sedation usually not used</td>
<td>May be some discomfort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does not require a specialist</td>
<td>Very small risk of bleeding, infection, or bowel tear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Done every five years</td>
<td>Colonoscopy will be needed if abnormal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CT Colonography (Virtual Colonoscopy)</td>
<td>Procedure takes about 10 minutes</td>
<td>Can miss small polyps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fairly safe</td>
<td>Some false positive test results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Full bowel preparation needed</td>
<td>Cannot remove polyps during testing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No sedation needed</td>
<td>Colonoscopy will be needed if abnormal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Can usually view entire colon</td>
<td>Still fairly new</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Done every five years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fecal Immunochemical Test (FIT)</td>
<td>No direct risk to the colon</td>
<td>May miss many polyps and some cancers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No bowel preparation</td>
<td>May produce false-positive test results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No pre-test dietary restrictions</td>
<td>Colonoscopy will be needed if abnormal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sampling done at home</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fairly inexpensive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Should be done annually</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fecal Occult Blood Test (FOBT)</td>
<td>No direct risk to the colon</td>
<td>May miss many polyps and some cancers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No bowel preparation</td>
<td>May produce false-positive test results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sampling done at home</td>
<td>May have pre-test dietary limitations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inexpensive</td>
<td>Colonoscopy will be needed if abnormal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Should be done annually</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>