CANCER AWARENESS IN ILLINOIS

COLORECTAL CANCER

MARCH 2025

March is Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month. In Illinois in 2021, 5,878 people (2,732 females and 3,146 males) were diagnosed with colorectal cancer. The incidence rate was 33.0 per 100,000 females and 44.2 per 100,000 males. In 2021, 2,116 people (1,123 males and 993 females) died from colorectal cancer.

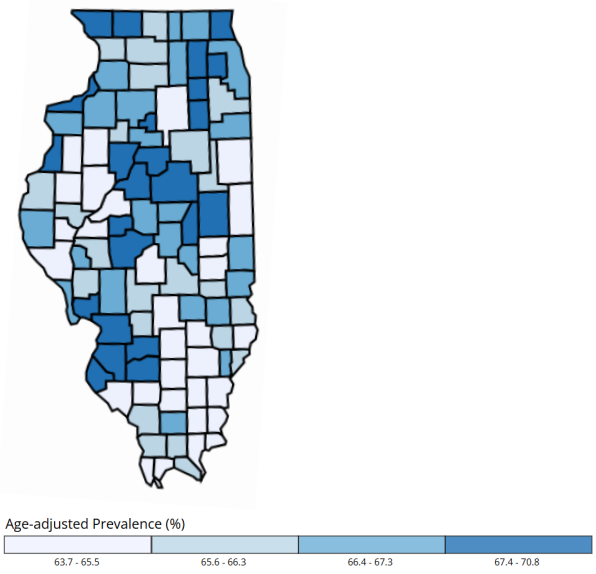
The risk factors for colorectal cancer are:

- Poor diet
- Lack of physical activity
- Overweight or obese
- Alcohol or tobacco use
- Family history of colorectal cancer
- Personal history of colorectal cancer, polyps, or bowel disease

SCREENING GUIDELINES

Screening can help detect colorectal cancer early when treatment works best. Currently, the United States Preventive Services Task Force (SPSTF) recommends that people aged 45 to 75 years be screened for colorectal cancer. Screening tests for colorectal cancer include a fecal occult blood test, sigmoidoscopy, colonoscopy, virtual colonoscopy, or a DNA stool test.

The percentage of adults aged 50-75 who reported being up to date with colorectal cancer screening, BRFSS 2020, all races and ethnicities, male and female, and age-adjusted prevalence.



Percentage of adults aged 50-75 years who reported being up to date with colorectal cancer screening, BRFSS 2020, all races and ethnicities, male and female, age-adjusted prevalence by county.

County	Age-adjusted Prevalence
Adams	66.9
Alexander	64.2
Bond	66.1
Boone	66.6
Brown	65.1
Bureau	66.6
Calhoun	67.2
Carroll	66.3
Cass	64.1
Champaign	68.1
Christian	65.5
Clark	66.9
Clay	64.9
Clinton	67.6
Coles	65.3
Cook	66.7
Crawford	66
Cumberland	66.3
De Witt	66.4
DeKalb	66.7
Douglas	65
DuPage	70.6
Edgar	66.5
Edwards	66.7
Effingham	66.7
Fayette	64.8
Ford	66.3
Franklin	64.8
Fulton	65.2
Gallatin	63.7
Greene	65.9
Grundy	67.7
Hamilton	65.4
Hancock	65.7

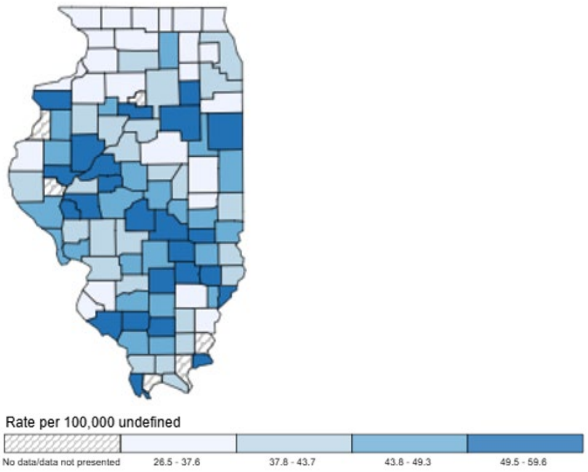
County	Age-adjusted Prevalence
Hardin	65.5
Henderson	67.5
Henry	67.3
Iroquois	65.4
Jackson	66
Jasper	66.6
Jefferson	65.2
Jersey	67.7
Jo Daviess	68.4
Johnson	66
Kane	68.2
Kankakee	67
Kendall	68.7
Knox	64.6
La Salle	65.3
Lake	68.5
Lawrence	65.1
Lee	66
Livingston	66.1
Logan	66.8
Macon	67.1
Macoupin	66.4
Madison	70.5
Marion	65
Marshall	66.6
Mason	65.3
Massac	65.9
McDonough	65.5
McHenry	67.3
McLean	69.1
Menard	68.5
Mercer	66.7
Monroe	70.7
Montgomery	65.9

County	Age-adjusted Prevalence
Morgan	65.7
Moultrie	66.8
Ogle	65.8
Peoria	68.9
Perry	65
Piatt	68.8
Pike	64.9
Pope	64
Pulaski	64.9
Putnam	67.6
Randolph	65.2
Richland	65.9
Rock Island	68
Saline	65.5
Sangamon	68.5
Schuyler	65.9
Scott	66.8
Shelby	66.1
St. Clair	70.8
Stark	65.7
Stephenson	67.4
Tazewell	67.5
Union	65.6
Vermilion	65.3
Wabash	65.6
Warren	65.5
Washington	67.8
Wayne	65.5
White	64.9
Whiteside	66.6
Will	66.2
Williamson	66.7
Winnebago	66
Woodford	69.5

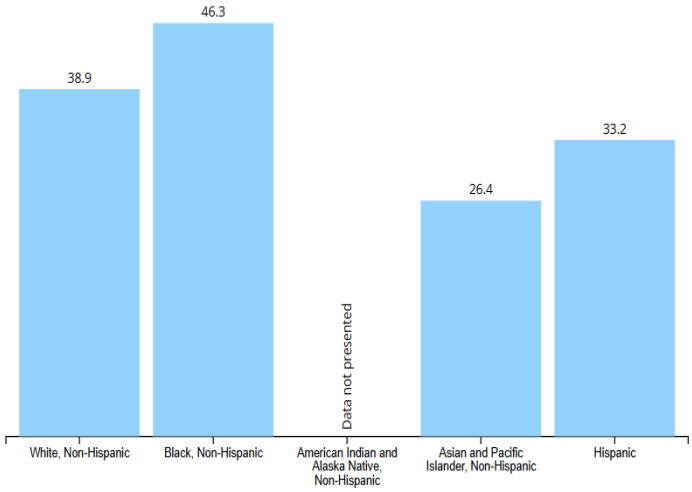
Source - U.S. Cancer Statistics Working Group. U.S. Cancer Statistics Data Visualizations Tool, based on 2022 submission data (1999-2021): U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and National Cancer Institute; https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/dataviz.

INCIDENCE RATES

Rate of colorectal cancer incidence by Illinois county, all ages, all races, and ethnicities, 2017-2021.



Rate of new cancers in Illinois by race and ethnicity, 2017-2021.



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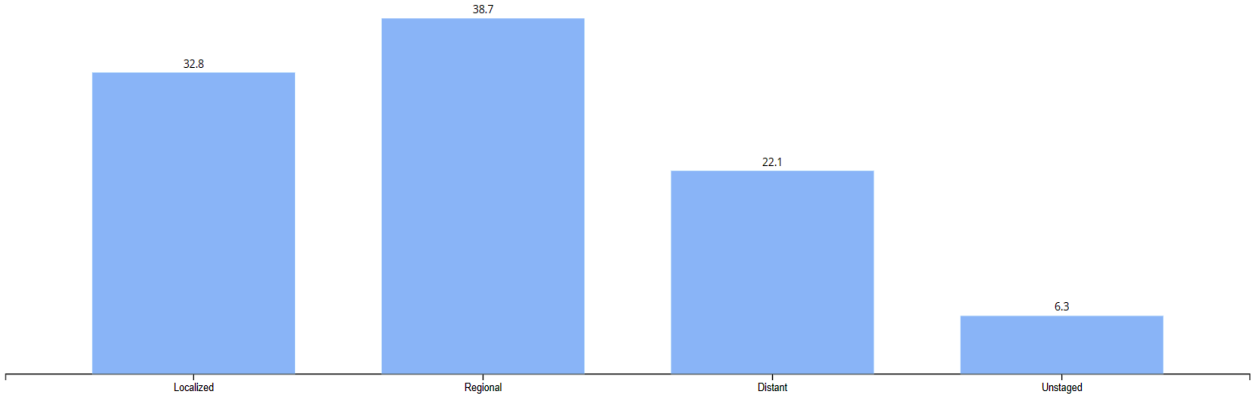
LATE-STAGE DIAGNOSIS

The following chart shows the distribution of new colorectal cancer diagnoses by stage. The summary stage characterizes invasive cancers as localized, regional, or distant. Localized cancer is confined to the primary site, regional cancer has spread directly beyond the primary site (regional extension) or to regional lymph nodes, and distant cancer has spread to other organs (distant extension) or remote lymph nodes (U.S. Cancer Statistics Data Visualizations, 2024). Some cancers are unstaged, or the stage is unknown or unspecified.

Stage distribution (percentage) of new cancer cases, all ages, all races and ethnicities, Illinois, 2017-2021.



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Incidence rate report for Illinois by county for late-stage colon and rectum diagnosis, 2017-2021, all races (includes Hispanic), both sexes, all ages.

County	Percent of Cases with Late Stage
Illinois	61.2
U.S.	59.8
Adams	69.1
Alexander	*
Bond	48
Boone	64.4
Brown	*
Bureau	60.2
Calhoun	*
Carroll	*
Cass	55.9
Champaign	55.5
Christian	63.8
Clark	64.6
Clay	63.3
Clinton	62.9
Coles	57.7
Cook	61.9
Crawford	50
Cumberland	55
De Witt	57.4
DeKalb	63.2
Douglas	55.1
DuPage	62.5
Edgar	61.8
Edwards	*
Effingham	58.1
Fayette	57.1
Ford	63.6
Franklin	61.5
Fulton	61.7
Gallatin	*
Greene	65.8
Grundy	56

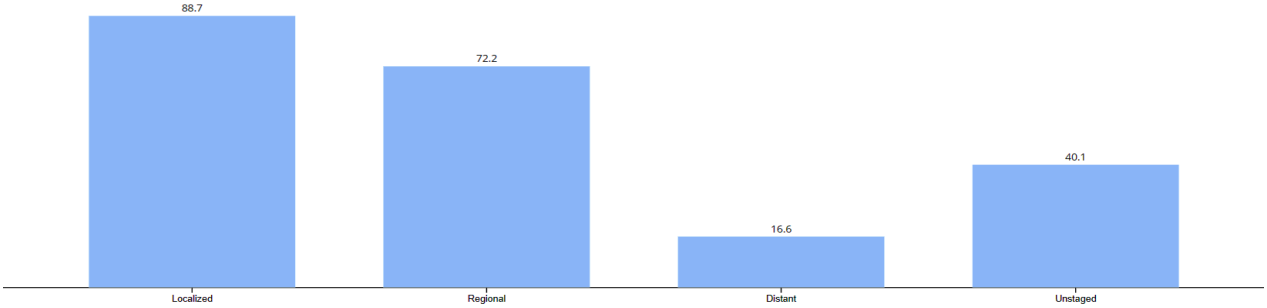
County	Percent of Cases with Late Stage
Hamilton	66.7
Hancock	59.2
Hardin	*
Henderson	*
Henry	51.9
Iroquois	63
Jackson	54.3
Jasper	58.6
Jefferson	57.9
Jersey	47.8
Jo Daviess	52.5
Johnson	62.5
Kane	62.4
Kankakee	59.9
Kendall	53.2
Knox	63.5
La Salle	60.6
Lake	58.8
Lawrence	60
Lee	61.8
Livingston	62.9
Logan	67.5
Macon	64.6
Macoupin	64.7
Madison	59.2
Marion	56.3
Marshall	58.1
Mason	59.6
Massac	51.2
McDonough	52.5
McHenry	61.4
McLean	59
Menard	65.3
Mercer	63.3
Monroe	55

County	Percent of Cases with Late Stage
Montgomery	64.3
Morgan	60.7
Moultrie	69.6
Ogle	62.6
Peoria	58.9
Perry	67.1
Piatt	54.3
Pike	76.6
Pope	*
Pulaski	*
Putnam	*
Randolph	64.2
Richland	61.9
Rock Island	58.8
Saline	66.7
Sangamon	65.2
Schuyler	82.1
Scott	*
Shelby	58.5
St. Clair	57.8
Stark	*
Stephenson	49.1
Tazewell	51.8
Union	62.3
Vermilion	61.9
Wabash	59
Warren	63.5
Washington	55.8
Wayne	66.7
White	65.7
Whiteside	63.7
Will	64.8
Williamson	58.5
Winnebago	62.3
Woodford	59

* Data has been suppressed to ensure the confidentiality and stability of rate estimates. Counts are suppressed if fewer than 16 records were reported in a specific area-sex-race category. If an average count of 3 is shown, the total number of cases for the period is 16 or more, which exceeds the suppression threshold (but is rounded to 3).
Source – https://statecancerprofiles.cancer.gov/

The following chart shows the five-year survival percentage by stage of colorectal cancer, which shows the higher survival rates when diagnosed at earlier stages.

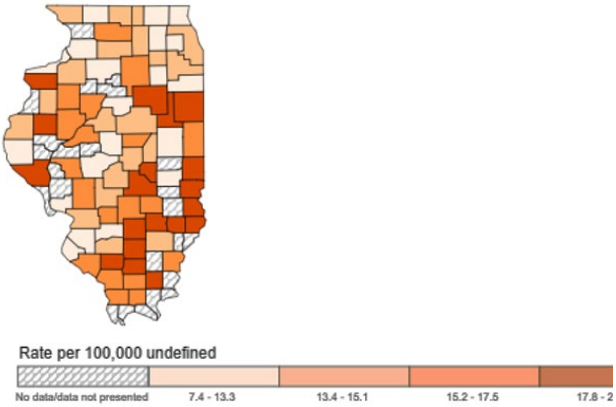
Five-year relative survival (percentage) by stage of cancer cases, all ages, all races, and ethnicities, Illinois.



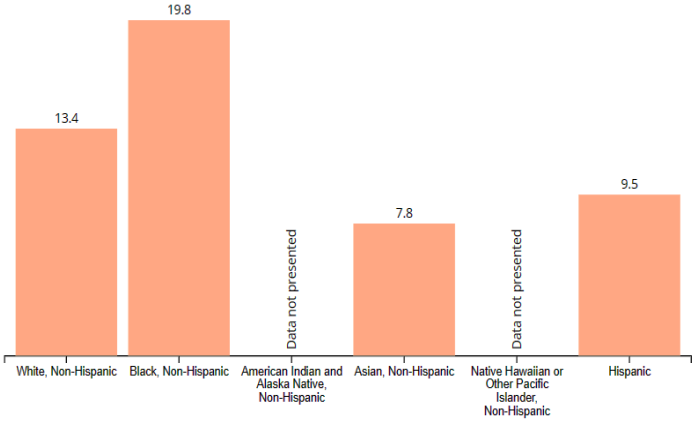
Source - U.S. Cancer Statistics Working Group. U.S. Cancer Statistics Data Visualizations Tool, based on 2022 submission data (1999-2021): U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and National Cancer Institute; https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/dataviz, released in June 2024.

MORTALITY RATES

Rate of new cancer deaths by Illinois county, all ages, all races, and ethnicities, 2018-2022.



Rate of new cancer deaths in Illinois, by race and ethnicity, 2018-2022.



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GENETIC TESTING

Genetic testing for colorectal cancer can help identify people who have a high risk of developing the disease due to inherited cancer syndromes. Some of these syndromes are Lynch syndrome and familial adenomatous polyposis.

Learn more about colorectal cancer and genetic testing.

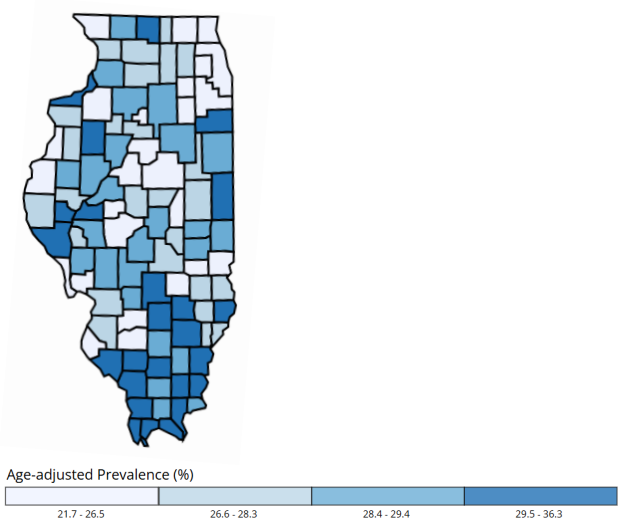
- American Cancer Society: https://www.cancer.org/cancer/types/colon-rectal-cancer/causes-risks-prevention/genetic-tests-screening-prevention.html

- CDC Hereditary Colorectal (Colon) Cancer: https://www.cdc.gov/genomics/disease/colorectal_cancer/index.htm
- NIH National Cancer Institute Genetics of Colorectal Cancer–Health Professional Version: https://www.cancer.gov/types/colorectal/hp/colorectal-genetics-pdq

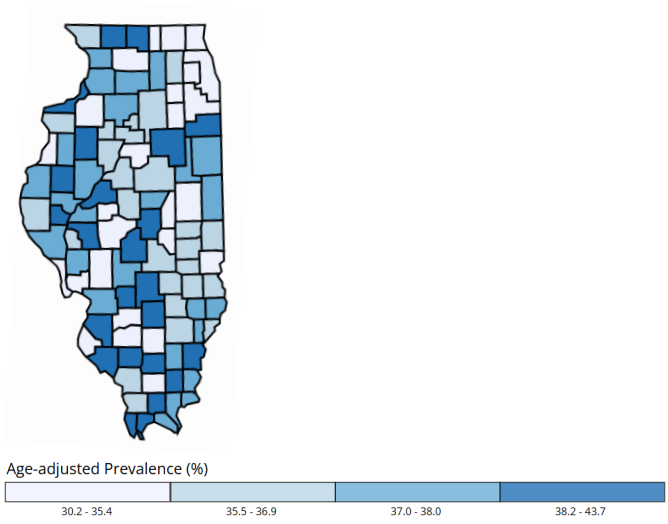
GROUPS AT HIGH RISK

Several lifestyle-related factors have been associated with colorectal cancer, such as being overweight or obese, lack of physical activity, and tobacco use. Addressing these risk factors may help lower the risk of colorectal cancer.

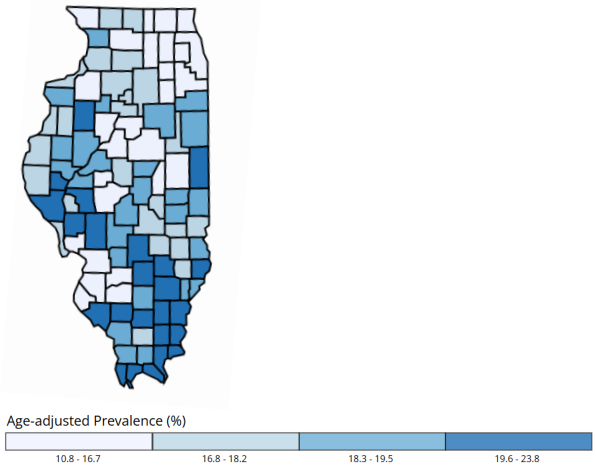
Adults aged 18 years and older (percentage) who reported no leisure time physical activity in 30 days, BRFSS 2021, All Races and Ethnicities, Male and Female, Age-adjusted Prevalence



Adults aged 18 years and older (percentage) who reported obese body mass index greater than 30 kg/m², BRFSS 2021, All Races and Ethnicities, Male and Female, Age-adjusted Prevalence



Adults aged 18 years and older (percentage) who reported current smoking, BRFSS 2021, All Races and Ethnicities, Male and Female, Age-adjusted Prevalence



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SUGGESTED POLICY, SYSTEM, AND ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE STRATEGIES

- Advocate for patient navigation to address barriers to access to care (lack of transportation, cost, lack of insurance, etc.).
- Advocate for targeted outreach and screening for minority high-risk populations, utilizing cancer incidence, mortality, and late-stage diagnosis data to prioritize high-risk communities and populations.
- Provide outreach and support to assist those whose employers do not offer affordable coverage, who are self-employed or unemployed.
- Establish transportation services for areas with low population densities using publicly funded buses and vans on a set schedule, dial-a-ride transit, volunteer ridesharing, etc.

CLINICAL TRIALS

Clinical trials are research studies conducted for doctors to find new ways to improve treatments and the quality of life for people with certain diseases. Researchers design cancer clinical trials to test new ways to treat cancer, find and diagnose cancer, prevent cancer, and manage cancer symptoms and side effects from its treatment.

- National Cancer Institute: https://ccr.cancer.gov/clinical-trials/all?query=colorectal+cancer
- National Library of Medicine: https://www.clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=colorectal%20cancer

RESOURCES

- American Cancer Society: https://www.cancer.org/cancer/colon-rectal-cancer.html
- Illinois Tobacco Quitline: https://quityes.org/ or by phone (Se habla español):
  - 1-866-QUIT-YES (1-866-784-8937)
  - TTY (1-800-501-1068)
  - Monday through Friday: 7 a.m. – 9 p.m. CST
  - Saturday and Sunday: 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. CST
- Mayo Clinic (Colon cancer): https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/colon-cancer/symptoms-causes/syc-20353669
- Mayo Clinic (Rectal cancer): https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/rectal-cancer/symptoms-causes/syc-20352884
- National Cancer Institute: https://www.cancer.gov/types/colorectal

CONTINUING EDUCATION

- CDC: https://www.train.org/cdctrain/search?query=colorectal%20cancer
- Medscape CME and Education: https://search.medscape.com/search/?q=%22colorectal%20cancer%22&plr=edu&page=1
- National Comprehensive Cancer Network: https://education.nccn.org/course-catalog-list?text=colorectal+&sort_by=field_course_event_date_value

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