

Health Alert!

How A Simple Colorectal Cancer Screening Saved A Life

(NAPSA)—For years, Al Prado ignored his doctors' recommendations to get a colorectal cancer screening. Finally, during a routine physical, Kaiser Permanente's Sue Williams, M.D., convinced Prado to take a simple at-home fecal immunochemical test—and she probably saved his life.



When Prado's FIT results came back positive, Dr. Williams scheduled him for a colonoscopy. The results revealed that he had Stage 1 colon cancer.

Prado

"I am so glad that Dr. Williams talked me into sending that little sample," said Prado, a Kaiser Permanente Colorado member. Because his cancer was discovered early, doctors were able to treat it before it progressed and spread to other parts of his body.

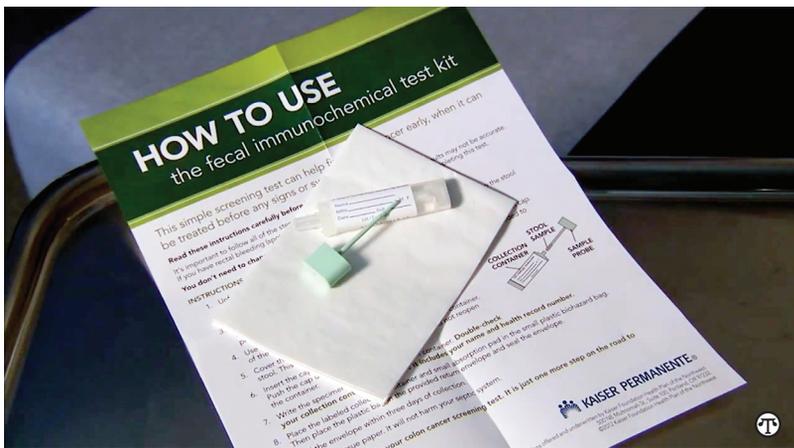
What Is Colorectal Cancer?

Colorectal cancer means cells that aren't normal are growing in your colon or rectum. These cells grow together and form polyps. Over time, some polyps can turn into cancer.

This cancer is also called colon cancer or rectal cancer, depending on where the cancer is. It is the third most common cancer in the United States. And it occurs most often in people older than 50. Regular screening, beginning at age 50, is the key to detecting polyps before they become cancerous.

Why Get Screened?

Many people with early colon



Timely screening for colorectal cancer can help to save lives. In this case, it helped to save Al Prado's life.

cancer do not feel unwell or show any symptoms, so it's important to get regular screenings to identify and diagnose colon cancer. "We know that colon cancer screening saves lives and this test is an easy way to get screened," Dr. Williams said.

The FIT is simple to take and can be done in the privacy and comfort of your home. Use the kit to get a fecal sample and then mail it back to your doctor in the envelope provided. If there are traces of blood in the sample, your doctor may recommend a colonoscopy, as blood may be a sign of colon cancer.

Prado describes FIT as painless, quick and easy, admitting it was stubborn of him to disregard the doctors' advice all those years. Now Prado is grateful. "I'm so thankful Kaiser Permanente

found that cancer in me and took care of it all."

Recent Kaiser Permanente research shows that tests like FIT can detect about 79 percent of colorectal cancers. Findings also show the test will correctly identify about 94 percent of patients who do not have cancers of the rectum or colon. See more at <http://bit.ly/1cRC21w>.

Are You Due For A Screening?

Your individual risks and lifestyle may affect when and how you should be screened for colon cancer, so speak with your doctor about your unique needs. For more information about general screening recommendations and other health-related topics, visit www.kp.org or partnersinhealth.kp.org, and see Prado's story on Kaiser Permanente's Care Stories video blog at <http://bit.ly/1ir9ZJD>.