

# HEADLINES ARE MISLEADING.



## COLORECTAL CANCER SCREENING SAVES LIVES!

You may have recently read or heard that a study published in *The New England Journal of Medicine* showed that colonoscopy does not reduce colorectal cancer very much and does not reduce death from colorectal cancer.

Not exactly.

As with many things, the details matter. Those details show a very different picture than the headlines suggest.

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### THE STUDY:

- ▶ 85,000 people living in four countries in Europe
- ▶ One-third received a letter inviting them to have a colonoscopy, the others received no colorectal cancer screening
- ▶ Ten years later, colon cancer risk was 18% less in the invited group and there was no difference in colorectal cancer deaths between the groups. This is the typical headline
- ▶ But... many important details were left out

### THE DETAILS:

- ▶ Less than half (42%) of those invited to have a colonoscopy actually had one
- ▶ In those who *actually had a colonoscopy*:
  - » The risk of *developing* colorectal cancer decreased by 31%
  - » The risk of *dying* from colorectal cancer decreased by 50%

### THE BOTTOM LINE:

This study, along with prior studies, shows that colonoscopy decreases your chances of getting and dying from colorectal cancer. Getting sick and dying from colorectal cancer – especially due to delayed screening – is real. Screening with colonoscopy saves lives.

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For more information, check out the topics on [Colonoscopy](#) and [Colorectal Cancer](#):

[gi.org/topics/colorectal-cancer](https://gi.org/topics/colorectal-cancer)