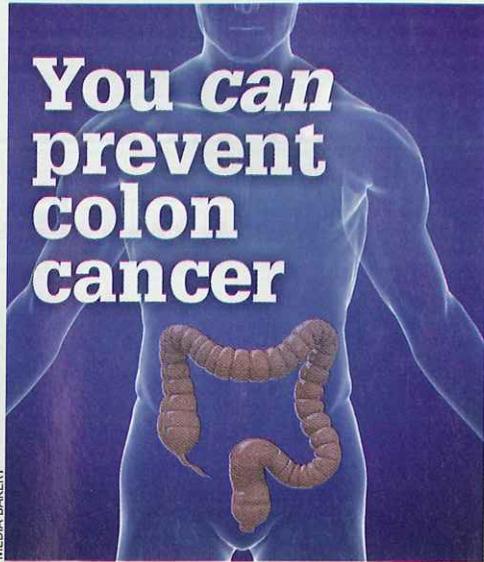


# HEALTHY BODIES

## You can prevent colon cancer



MEDIA BAKERY

By Shelley Lawson

IF YOU'RE LIKE most people, you don't like to talk about your digestive system. But did you know that colon cancer is the second-leading cause of cancer death? According to its most recent data, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) found that 38 percent of people diagnosed with colorectal cancer died from it.

The good news is that regular screening can prevent colon cancer from starting. Screening detects growths on your colon (called polyps) so they can be removed before they turn into cancer.

Anyone can get colon cancer, but your risk increases significantly after the age of 50. Other factors that increase your chances of colon cancer:

- A personal or family history of inflammatory bowel disease such as ulcerative colitis or Crohn's disease.
- Smoking is a well-known cause of lung can-

cer, but swallowing the cancer-causing substances in cigarettes also causes colon cancer.

- Being overweight increases your risk for lots of health problems, including colon cancer.
- If your parents, siblings or children developed colon cancer or were diagnosed with precancerous polyps before the age of 60, your risk for developing colon cancer increases. Talk to your family members about their health history.

Precancerous colon polyps or early-stage colon cancer often don't have symptoms; that's why screening is so important. When you turn 50, talk to your doctor about colon cancer screening. If you have a family history of colon cancer, talk to your doctor earlier. Your doctor will recommend one of several tests proven effective at detecting cancer or polyps.

- Fecal occult blood tests look for hidden blood in your stool, which could be an early sign of polyps or cancer. These tests are done once per year.
- Colonoscopy is a visual observation of your colon by a gastroenterologist. This test requires you to clean your colon the day before the test. Polyps can be removed during this procedure. If no polyps are found, you don't need another colonoscopy for 10 years.
- Sigmoidoscopy is a visual observation of half your colon by a specially trained doctor. This test also requires a clean colon. If nothing is found, you don't need another one for five years.

Many state and local health departments are working with the CDC to get the word out about the importance of colon cancer screening. Many of these health departments also have programs to help uninsured people gain access to colon cancer screening. Go to [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) for a list of participating health departments. [E]

**Costco member Shelley Lawson is a project manager for Public Health—Seattle & King County in Washington State.**

## Buyer's pick

Teresa Thompson  
Pharmacy Buyer



FRANCE FREEMAN

IN 2001 BAUSCH & LOMB participated in a nationwide National Eye Institute clinical trial that concluded that using high levels of antioxidants and zinc significantly reduces the risk of age-related macular degeneration (see story on page 29)—the leading cause of blindness in the U.S. among people 65 years old and older.

The Bausch & Lomb formula used in that study proved clinically effective. PreserVision® Eye Vitamin Lutein Formula is a reformulated version that replaces the beta carotene in the original with lutein.

Lutein is an antioxidant pigment naturally found in the macula—the area of the eye responsible for central vision. Lutein acts as a filter to protect against damage to the macula from blue light in the visible light spectrum. People are born with a certain natural amount of lutein in their eyes, but the body doesn't reproduce it.

It is present in the highest quantity in leafy dark green vegetables such as spinach and kale, but you'd have to eat more than two bowls of raw spinach every day to get the recommended 6 mg minimum daily dose of lutein. Likewise, taking a multivitamin delivers only a fraction of the recommended amount.

The suggested daily dosage of PreserVision Lutein Formula—one gel tab twice a day—surpasses the daily requirement, delivering 10 mg of lutein. [E]



## Dry Eye Awareness Month

JULY IS DRY EYE Awareness Month. According to the National Women's Health Resource Center (NWHRC), dry eye syndrome is one of the most common eye-related complaints in the U.S., affecting nearly 21 million people. It can affect men and women at any age, and is common over the age of 40. Postmenopausal women are frequently susceptible, possibly due in part to hormonal changes.

The cause of dry eyes varies. For some people, the cause is an imbalance in the composition of their tears. With others, not enough tears are produced

to keep their eyes comfortably lubricated. Eyelid problems, medications and environmental factors—heat, dryness, wind, high altitudes, smoke—can also lead to dry eyes.

Symptoms of dry eyes, usually affecting both eyes, include:

- Stinging, burning or scratchy sensations in both eyes
- Stringy mucus in or around eyes
- Eye fatigue after short periods of reading
- Sensitivity to light
- Difficulty wearing contact lenses

- Tearing
- Blurred vision, often worsening late in the day

There is no cure for dry eyes, but, depending on severity, treatments range from artificial tears to surgery for extreme cases. See your doctor if you've had prolonged symptoms of dry eyes, including red, irritated, tired or painful eyes.

For more information, visit the NWHRC website [www.healthywomen.org/condition/dry-eye-syndrome](http://www.healthywomen.org/condition/dry-eye-syndrome).

—David Wight

Costco carries Systane® Ultra Lubricant Eye Drops at all locations.