

TAKING SIDES:


Right vs. Left Colorectal Cancer

Even though it's one organ, the left and the right sides of your colon are very different.

The two halves are connected to completely different blood supplies and lymphatic systems. Recent studies are showing that cancers on the right and left are different too.

CANCER ON THE RIGHT

aka cecum, ascending & transverse

More often diagnosed in women 

Flat, sessile polyps go unnoticed until they are fairly large

Symptoms can be anemia or vomiting

Diagnosed at a later stage


Connected to HNPCC

Diagnosed at an earlier stage

Bowel obstruction more common as a symptom

CANCER ON THE LEFT


aka splenic flexure, descending & sigmoid + rectosigmoid & rectum

More often diagnosed in men 

Cancers grow along the inside wall of the colon, encircling it and narrowing the space


Primary symptom is change in bowel habits, including bleeding

Connected to FAP



What does this mean for you?

More studies need to be done, but it is likely that the side of your cancer will eventually be used as a biomarker for metastatic colorectal cancer and help guide treatment decisions.

 COLON CANCER ALLIANCE

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<https://fasny.com/resources/wellness/articles/firefighters-and-colorectal-cancer/#:~:text=Firefighters%20are%20at%20increased%20risk,risk%20in%20the%20general%20population.>