

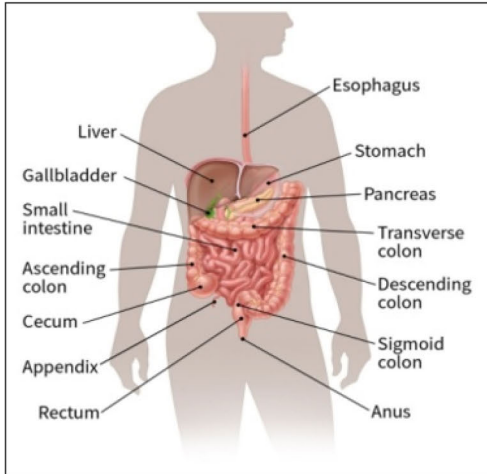


Tips from Training



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Colon Cancer and Firefighters



Firefighter Cancer Rates Vs. General Public Rates

- Testicular cancer - 2.02 times greater
- Multiple myeloma - 1.53 times greater
- Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma - 1.51 times greater
- Skin Cancer - 1.39 times greater
- Brain Cancer - 1.31 times greater
- Malignant melanoma - 1.31 times greater
- Prostate cancer - 1.28 times greater
- Colon cancer - 1.21 times greater**
- Leukemia - 1.14 times greater

The most likely cause are the chemicals emitted from regular household products when they burn.

Firefighters face a greater risk of exposure to toxins now than ever before. In the past several decades what is burning has significantly changed. **This requires a greater emphasis on ensuring our protective equipment is maintained clean.** Firefighters must put a greater emphasis and be aware of the signs and symptoms of those cancers and illnesses that present a greater risk to them as compared to the regular population. March is colon cancer awareness month and a good time to increase the awareness of our members to this insidious cancer.

- Research published in 2019 found significantly elevated incidences of cancer of the colon and rectum. (1.21 times higher than the general population).
- Colorectal cancer starts in the colon or the rectum. These cancers can also be called colon cancer or rectal cancer, depending on where they start. Colon cancer and rectal cancer are often grouped together because they have many features in common.
- Minimize your risk – ensure your bunker gear, hood, gloves, boots, and the inside lining of your helmet are maintained clean as per existing department policy. ([See AUC 310 – Addendum 1](#))
- The American Cancer Society recommends that if your **age 45 or older**, you should start getting screened for colorectal cancer. Other risk factors such as family history may require screening at an earlier age.
- **The best screening test is the one that gets done.** Do not put screening off. Cancers that are detected early have a higher rate of cure.
- Colorectal polyps and colorectal cancer do not always cause symptoms, especially at first. Someone could have polyps or colorectal cancer and not know it. That is why getting screened regularly for colorectal cancer is so important.
- If you have symptoms, they may include— a change in bowel habits, blood in or on your stool (bowel movement), diarrhea, constipation, or feeling that the bowel does not empty all the way, abdominal pain, aches, or cramps that do not go away and losing weight and you do not know why.

FDNY Lieutenant Ed McDonagh was diagnosed with colon cancer on March 26, 2014. He was 47 years old. He passed away 6 weeks past his 49th birthday.

[Hear Lt. McDonagh's story in this short but powerful video:](#)

Read about his story beginning on page 60 of this link: <https://www.fdnipro.org/reduceyourrisk/>

[Learn more about colon cancer](#)

Submit a potential Training Tip via email to: TrainingTips@fdny.nyc.gov