

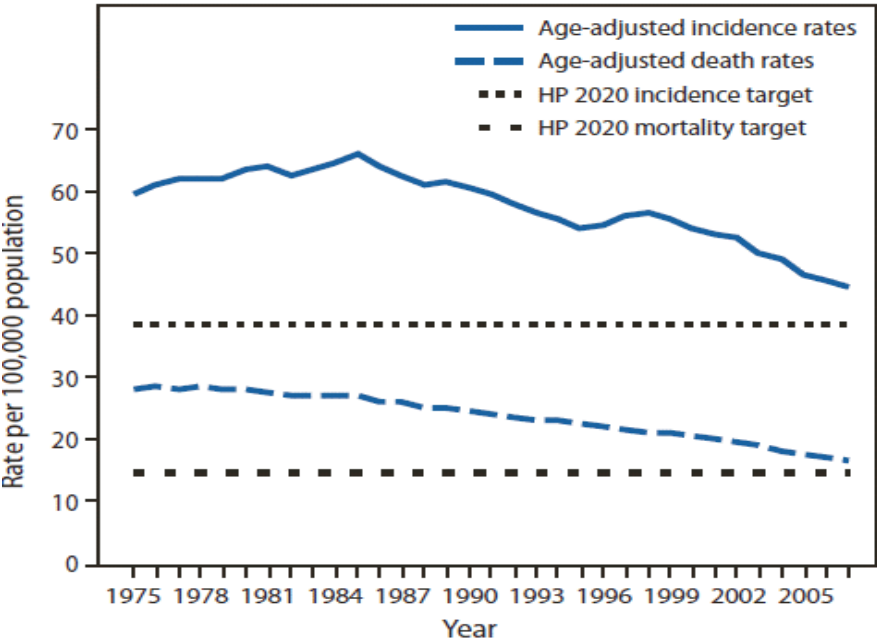


## The Fight Against Colorectal Cancer

According to the National Cancer Institute, colon cancer is the third most commonly diagnosed cancer, affecting more than 132,700 Americans and killing nearly 50,000 in 2015 alone. While these numbers have declined in recent years, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released research showing that if all precancerous polyps were identified and removed before becoming cancerous, the number of new colorectal cancer cases could be reduced by 76 to 90 percent.

As the graph below indicates, the number of individuals who have been diagnosed with colorectal cancer has decreased over the years. Specifically, the figure shows declines in the incidence of colorectal cancer from 59.5 per 100,000 population in 1975 to 44.7 in 2007 and in the colorectal cancer death rate from 28.6 per 100,000 population in 1976 to 16.7 in 2007. It also shows the corresponding Healthy People 2020 targets of 38.6 per 100,000 and 14.5, respectively. These declines coincide with an increase in the number of Americans undergoing colon cancer screenings during the same period of time.

**Age-adjusted colorectal cancer incidence and death rates\* and Healthy People 2020 (HP 2020) targets - United States, 1975 - 2007**



Sources: Incidence data are provided from nine areas (San Francisco, Connecticut, Detroit, Hawaii, Iowa, New Mexico, Seattle, Utah, and Atlanta) of the Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results (SEER) Program. Additional information available at <http://seer.cancer.gov>.

Mortality data are provided by U.S. Mortality Files of the National Vital Statistics System.

\* Per 100,000 population, age-adjusted to the 2000 US standard population.

Source: <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6026a4.htm>

The US Preventive Services Task Force recommends that all Americans age 50 and older undergo regular colonoscopies in accordance with their doctor's recommendations. This simple and painless procedure has the potential to dramatically reduce the incidence of colorectal cancer. If a polyp is found, a doctor could quickly and easily remove it.

In 2015, ASCs performed more than 40 percent of the colonoscopies under Medicare and played a vital role in ensuring patient access to preventive care in a convenient and affordable setting. They have the capacity to do more. When these life-saving procedures are performed in ASCs, both beneficiaries and the Medicare program save money because surgery centers perform the procedures at a lower cost.