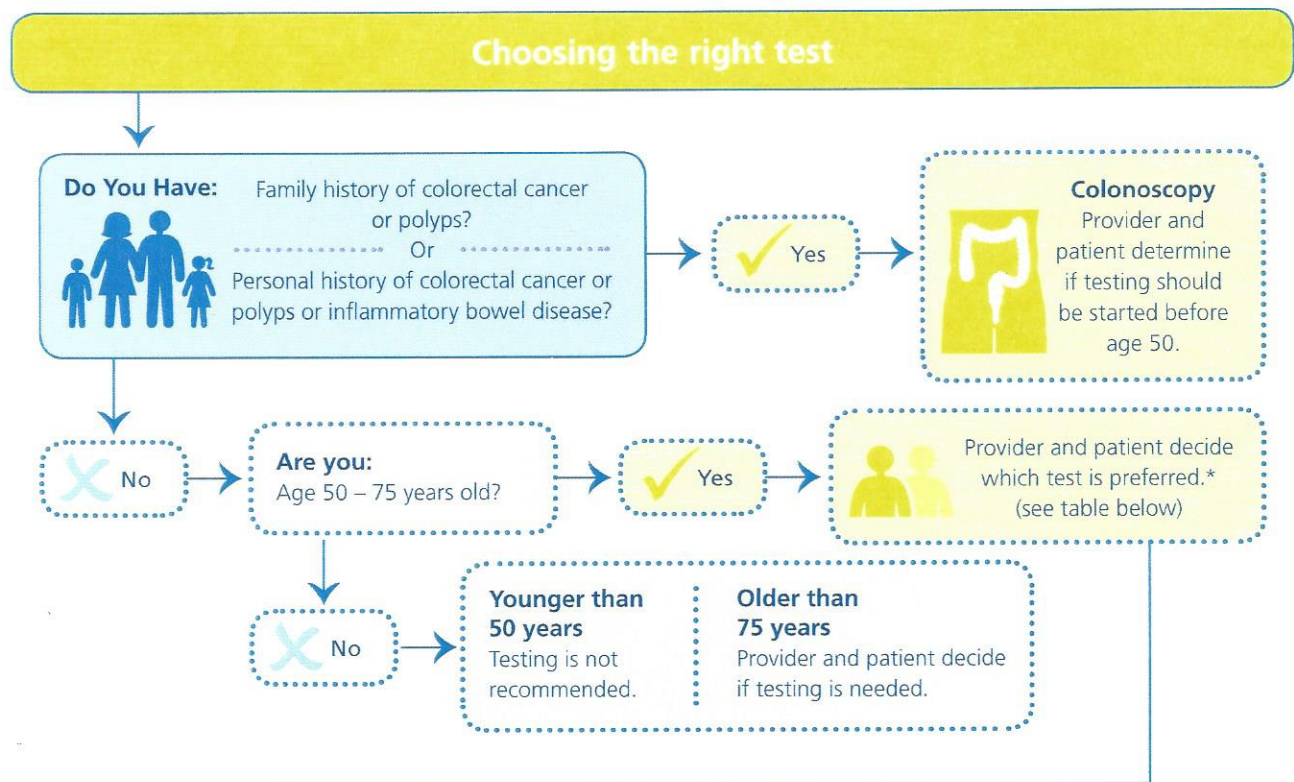


Figure 2. Choosing the Right Test



| FOBT/FIT† | Colonoscopy |
|--|--|
| <p>Key facts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduces death from colorectal cancer • Safe, available, and easy to complete • Done on your own at home and returned • Finds cancer early by finding blood in the stool • Finds most cancers early when done every year | <p>Key facts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduces death from colorectal cancer • Can prevent cancer by removing polyps (or abnormal growths in the colon) during test • Examines entire colon • Finds most cancers or polyps that are present at the time of the test • Done every 10 years if no polyps are found |
| <p>Things to consider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May produce positive test results, even when no polyps or cancer are in the colon • When the test is positive colonoscopy is required • Person testing themselves comes into brief close contact with stool samples on a test kit <p>† Guaiac Fecal Occult Blood Test (FOBT) or Fecal Immunochemical Test (FIT)</p> | <p>Things to consider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stomach pain, gas or bloating is possible before, during or after test • Must be performed at a hospital or clinic, usually with sedation or anesthesia, and someone must go with the person to take him or her home after the test • A clear liquid diet is required before test • Must take medication that will cause loose bowel movements to clean out the colon prior to test • Likely needs to take a day off work/activities • Small risk of serious complications (for example, bleeding or perforated colon) |

*Flexible sigmoidoscopy may not be readily available and has largely been replaced by colonoscopy in the US.
 SOURCE: Vital Signs 2013 and USPSTF <http://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/uspstf/uspcolo.htm>

† FOBT should be high-sensitivity gFOBT, such as Hemoccult Sensa