

March – Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

COLORECTAL CANCER

STATISTICS

- Colorectal cancer is the 2nd leading cause of cancer-related death in Michigan, with only lung cancer taking the lives of more men and women.
- During 2005, 2,618 men and 2,682 women in Michigan were diagnosed with colorectal cancer.
- In 2006, 910 men and 984 women in Michigan died from colorectal cancer.
- Both men and women develop colorectal cancer and die from it.
- Michigan ranks 31st in the nation in colorectal cancer deaths.

RISK FACTORS

There are several factors that increase one's risk of developing colorectal cancer – also called colon or bowel cancer. These include:

- Increasing age
- A personal history of colon cancer, pre-cancerous colon polyps, or inflammatory bowel disease
- A family history of colon cancer or pre-cancerous colon polyps
- Being a Jew of Eastern European descent
- A diet high in animal fats or low in fiber
- Not being physically active
- Obesity
- Diabetes
- Smoking
- Heavy use of alcohol

SCREENING RECOMMENDATIONS

The Michigan Cancer Consortium recommends that men and women 50 years of age and older who are not at increased risk for colorectal cancer follow a screening schedule consisting of:

- Fecal occult blood test every year
-OR-
- Fecal immunochemical test every year
-OR-
- Flexible sigmoidoscopy every 5 years
-OR-
- Fecal occult blood test every year AND flexible sigmoidoscopy every 5 years
-OR-
- Double-contrast barium enema every 5 years
-OR-
- Computed tomographic colonography every 5 years
-OR-
- Colonoscopy every 10 years

RESOURCES

American Cancer Society

www.cancer.org

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

www.cdc.gov/cancer/screenforlife

Colon Cancer Alliance

www.ccalliance.org

Michigan Cancer Consortium

www.michigancancer.org

National Cancer Institute – Colon and Rectal Cancer

www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/types/colon-and-rectal

National Colorectal Cancer Research Alliance

www.eifoundation.org/national/nccra/splash

National Colorectal Cancer Roundtable

www.nccrt.org

Prevent Cancer Foundation

www.preventcancer.org



SCREENING SAVES LIVES

If you're 50 or older, getting a screening test for colorectal cancer could save your life. Here's how:

- Colorectal cancer usually starts from polyps in the colon or rectum. A polyp is a "mushroom-like" growth in the colon that shouldn't be there.
- Over time, some polyps can turn into cancer.
- Screening tests can find polyps and remove them before they turn into cancer.
- Screening tests can also find colorectal cancer early, when the chance of being cured is good.
- At the disease's earliest stages, there are virtually no symptoms. As colorectal cancer progresses to the later stages, changes in bowel movement patterns, bleeding, and abdominal discomfort are more likely to occur.

PREVENTION STRATEGIES

How can you stop colorectal cancer before it begins?

Step 1: Get Screened.

- Talk to your health care provider about what screening test is right for you.
- Family and personal history should be considered when determining screening options.
- If you are at an increased risk for colorectal cancer, screening should begin at an earlier age and be done more often.

Step 2: Make Healthy Choices Every Day!

- Eat high fiber, low fat diets. Whole grains are a plus. Avoid the french fries.
- Kick the butt! Smokers are at higher risk of colorectal cancer.
- Walk your 10,000 steps a day. Being active is being healthy.
- Know your family history and share information with other family members.