

March is Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

While the exact cause of most colorectal cancers is unknown, there are certain risk factors. Some risk factors, like smoking, can be controlled. Others, such as a person's age, cannot be changed. Several lifestyle-related factors have been linked to colorectal cancer. In fact, the links between diet, weight, and exercise and colorectal cancer risk are some of the strongest for any type of cancer.



Risk factors linked to behavior:

- **Certain types of diets:** A diet that is high in red meats (beef, lamb, or liver) and processed meats such as hot dogs, bologna, and lunch meat can increase your colorectal cancer risk. Cooking meats at very high heat (frying, broiling, or grilling) can create chemicals that might increase cancer risk. Diets high in vegetables and fruits have been linked with a lower risk of colorectal cancer.
- **Lack of exercise:** Getting more exercise may help reduce your risk.
- **Overweight:** Being very overweight increases a person's risk of dying from colorectal cancer.
- **Smoking:** Most people know that smoking causes lung cancer, but long-time smokers are more likely than non-smokers to die of colorectal cancer. Smoking increases the risk of many other cancers, too.
- **Alcohol:** Heavy use of alcohol has been linked to colorectal cancer.
- **Diabetes:** People with type 2 diabetes have an increased chance of getting colorectal cancer. They also tend to have a higher death rate from this cancer.

The American Cancer Society believes that preventing colorectal cancer (and not just finding it early) should be a major reason for getting tested. Finding and removing polyps keeps some people from getting colorectal cancer. Tests that have the best chance of finding both polyps and cancer are preferred if these tests are available to you and you are willing to have them. Beginning at age 50, both men and women at average risk for developing colorectal cancer should use one of the screening tests below.

Tests that find polyps and cancer:

- Flexible sigmoidoscopy every 5 years*
- Colonoscopy every 10 years
- Double contrast barium enema every 5 years*
- CT colonography (virtual colonoscopy) every 5 years*

Tests that mainly find cancer:

- Fecal occult blood test (FOBT) every year*,**
- Fecal immunochemical test (FIT) every year*,**
- Stool DNA test (sDNA), interval uncertain*

Screening needs may vary depending on age, risk factors, and signs or symptoms. Make sure to talk with a doctor about your individualized screening needs.

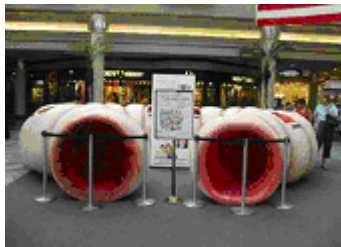
** Colonoscopy should be done if test results are positive*

*** For FOBT or FIT used as a screening test, the take-home multiple sample methods should be used. A FOBT or FIT done during a digital rectal exam in the doctor's office is not adequate for screening.*

Where can a person go for colorectal screenings?

- Primary care provider.
- If you have insurance, contact your insurance provider for information about tests that are covered by your plan and where you can go for screenings.
- Great Lakes Cancer Institute offering free FOBT kits in March. For more information, call 1-866-696-GLCI (4524)
- St. Joseph Mercy Hospital Oakland is offering free colorectal cancer screening kits in March. For more information, call 1-800-372-6094
- Royal Oak Medical Center (located at 5130 Coolidge Hwy.) will offer free FOBT kits for a limited time. Call 248-288-9500 for more information.
- ACCESS (Dearborn) offers reduced cost screenings. For more information, call 313-216-2246.
- Contact the American Cancer Society at 1-800-227-2345 to find out where colorectal cancer screenings are available near you.

Colossal Colon® Exhibit: “Keep Your Rear in the Clear”



The Colorectal Cancer Awareness Network (CRAN) of Southeast Michigan will be hosting the Colossal Colon® exhibit at the Detroit Science Center March 13 – March 18, 2009. “Coco,” as the Colossal Colon® is affectionately known, is a 40-foot long, 4-foot tall oversized model of the human colon that is designed to educate people about colorectal cancer and other diseases of the colon. Visitors who crawl through the Colossal Colon® will see Crohn's disease, diverticulosis, ulcerative colitis, hemorrhoids, cancerous and non-cancerous polyps,

and various stages of colon cancer.

The goal of the exhibit is to educate younger people about colorectal cancer, and the Colossal Colon® is the perfect educational tool to do just that. Coco gets everyone talking about colorectal cancer, which is one of the first steps in eliminating it. Adults and children alike can crawl through or look through windows to check out the various features inside Coco.

Why you should come?

- Where else can you crawl through a 40 ft. colon, or look into it?
- You get to see the Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) Quilt Project.
- It's a family friendly event- the exhibit is for all ages.
- March is colorectal cancer awareness month- come learn if you or someone you love should be getting screened right now.
- Colorectal cancer is the 2nd leading cause of cancer death; help us raise the awareness about it.
- Learn about diet and physical activity and how it can help you keep a healthy colon.
- Enjoy the fun and excitement of the entire Detroit Science Center.
- And much, much more!

For more information about colorectal cancer contact the [American Cancer Society](#). For more information about the [Colossal Colon®](#) exhibit at the Detroit Science Center, visit <http://www.detroitcolossalcolon.com/detroitcolossalcolon/>.

Source: American Cancer Society

ejl_3/09