March 2015

Wellness Quick Read

From The Solutions Group Wellness Team

Fast Facts

Colorectal Cancer Prevention Tips

There are some risk factors for colorectal cancer you can't change ,including age and a family history of the disease. However, some lifestyle choices can increase your risk for the disease.

To help prevent colorectal cancer:

- Eat a healthy diet. Diets high in red meats and processed meats, like lunch meat and hot dogs, can increase your risk of colorectal cancer.
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Get enough exercise.
- Stop smoking.
- Avoid heavy alcohol use.

Colorectal Cancer 101

More than 132,000 Americans will be diagnosed with colorectal cancer this year. Colorectal cancer, the combined term for cancers that start in either the colon or the rectum, is the third most common form of cancer diagnosed in women and men in the United States. To raise awareness, the American Cancer Society has designated March as Colorectal Cancer Month.

There are several types of colorectal cancer, but about 95% are adenocarcinomas that start with abnormal growths in the mucus glands in the colon or rectum. Symptoms of the disease can include changing bowel habits, bleeding, and stomach cramps. However, colorectal cancer doesn't usually have many early, clear symptoms. Often, by the time a patient recognizes symptoms, the cancer is advanced and difficult to treat. That's why regular screenings are so important, especially for individuals over 50 or who have a family history of colorectal cancer.

If caught early, colorectal cancer is often highly treatable. Doctors have a variety of effective treatments for colorectal cancer including surgery, radiation, and chemotherapy, which can be used alone or in combination to fight the disease. When it's found early and localized, the five-year survival rate for colon cancer is 90%.

Your best protection against colorectal cancer is maintaining a healthy lifestyle and getting regular screenings.

FIGHT COLORECTAL CANCER

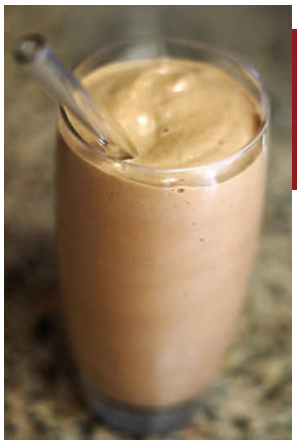
Screening Saves Lives!

Thanks in part to better screening, the death rate for colorectal cancer has been dropping. There are two main screening tests for colorectal cancer: colonoscopy and sigmoidoscopy.

During a colonoscopy, your doctor uses a thin, flexible tube fitted with a tiny camera to look inside your rectum and your entire colon to check for cancerous growths or polyps, which can be early signs of cancer. The process usually takes about 30 minutes and patients are given medicine to help them relax during the procedure.

A sigmoidoscopy is similar to a colonoscopy, but focuses only on the rectum and lower part of the colon. The procedure lasts about 10-20 minutes and sedatives for the patient aren't usually necessary.

Based on your health and medical history, your doctor will help you determine which screening you'll need and how often you'll need it.



Recipe of the Month
Chocolate Banana Peanut Butter Smoothie

This smoothie makes a delicious, quick breakfast or snack.

Ingredients

- ◊ 1 cup fat-free chocolate milk or low-fat chocolate soy milk
- ◊ 1 ripe banana
- ◊ 1 tablespoon peanut butter
- ◊ 4 to 6 ice cubes

Directions

Combine all the ingredients in a blender or food processor; blend until smooth.

Nutrition Information

Serving size: 1 smoothie

Calories: 330; Total Fat: 13g; Saturated Fat: 2.5g; Cholesterol: 0mg; Sodium: 180mg; Total Carbohydrate: 44g; Dietary Fiber: 4g; Protein: 15g

Recipe source: Catherine Hoffmann, MS, RD
Click here for this recipe

Bite Into a Healthy Lifestyle!

By March, many New Year's resolutions have fallen by the wayside. So it's a great time to find fresh ways to maintain a healthy weight, reduce your risk of chronic disease, and feel great. In celebration of **National Nutrition Month**, bite into a healthier lifestyle by incorporating these four ideas into your daily routine.

Plan healthy plates

Fill half of every plate you eat with fruits and vegetables. Don't forget – canned and frozen fruits and vegetables are good, convenient alternatives to fresh produce.

Find new flavors

The grocery store is full of interesting, healthy, tasty food choices. Don't let boredom with your meal plans derail healthy eating. Try new versions of your favorites – red spinach instead of green, quinoa instead of rice, Asian pears instead of apples – to keep mealtime interesting and delicious.

Look at labels

Food labels contain the information you need to make healthy food choices. Calorie, sodium, sugar, and vitamin levels are all clearly marked. Don't forget to check the serving size; portion sizing is a major pitfall for many people.

Begin with breakfast

Your mom was right: breakfast *is* the most important meal of the day. A breakfast that combines lean protein, fruits and/or vegetables, and whole grain will give you the energy you need to get your day off to a great start.

Smart Snacks for Kids

Even when after-school activities put pressure on your schedule, snack time can be easy and healthy. Try these five, flavorful, fun after-school snacks:

- Mix dried fruit, whole-grain cereal, and nuts in snack bag
- Spread peanut butter on a whole-grain tortilla and wrap it around a banana
- Dip a your favorite granola bar in lowfat yogurt
- Fill a waffle cone with yogurt, fruit, and nuts
- Dip animal crackers in lowfat pudding

The Solutions Group