



PRESS RELEASE FOR LOCAL MEDIA

Central Michigan District Health Department
"Promoting Healthy Families, Healthy Communities"

For more information, please call: (989) 773-5921 ext. 8409
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To: Local News Media

From: Heather Cole, Health Educator-Central Michigan District Health Department

RE: Colorectal Cancer Awareness

Release Date: Immediately

Early Screening Essential to Prevention and Increasing Cure Rate

Central Michigan District Health Department is speaking out with advice for consumers on colorectal cancer, a potentially life-threatening disease. "Colorectal Cancer is the second leading cause of cancer deaths in the United States, with over 56,000 people expected to die from this disease each year," explains Dr. Robert Graham, Medical Director for the Central Michigan District Health Department. "However, it is a preventable and very curable disease if caught early."

Because there are often no symptoms when it is first developing, colorectal cancer can only be detected through regular early screening. "The benefits of early detection and treatment are dramatic," Dr. Graham says. "The possibility of curing patients after symptoms develop is only 50%, but if colorectal cancer is found and treated at an early stage before symptoms develop, the opportunity to cure is 80% or better."

If you are between the ages of 50 and 64, do not have health insurance, and have a limited income, contact your local office of the Central Michigan District Health Department to see if you are eligible for a free colorectal cancer screening (www.cmdhd.org). Central Michigan District Health Department offers free fecal-occult screening or colonoscopy screening for eligible men and women with average or higher-risk for colorectal cancer.

Family history of colorectal cancer, colon polyps, inflammatory bowel disease, and Crohn's disease are factors that create a higher risk for colorectal cancer. All men and women of average risk for colorectal cancer should have regular colorectal cancer screening, after the age of 50. Your doctor may recommend earlier screening if you have one or more risk factors.

Dr. Graham notes that in addition to getting screened regularly for colorectal cancer, people can lower their risk of getting the disease by:

- Avoiding foods that are high in fat
- Eating plenty of vegetables, fruits, and other high-fiber foods
- Exercising regularly and maintaining a normal body weight
- Not smoking
- Drinking alcohol only in moderation

For more information on colorectal cancer prevention and screening, visit www.cancer.org or www.cdc.gov/cancer.

This article has been brought to you by Central Michigan District Health Department, which serves the counties of Arenac, Clare, Gladwin, Isabella, Osceola and Roscommon Counties. Visit our website at www.cmdhd.org or join us (Central Michigan District Health Department) on Facebook.

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