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

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# PRESS RELEASE FOR LOCAL MEDIA

**To:** **Local News Media**

**From:** **Central Michigan District Health Department**

**RE:** **Colorectal Cancer Awareness – March 2020**

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## Early Screening Essential to Prevention and Increasing Cure Rate

Colorectal cancer is the third most common cancer diagnosed in both men and women in the United States with a lifetime risk of about 1 in 23 (4.4%) for men and 1 in 25 (4.1%) for women. The American Cancer Society estimates there will be 104,610 new cases of colon cancer diagnosed in the United States in 2020 and 43,340 cases of rectal cancer. It is estimated that colorectal cancers will cause about 53,200 deaths during 2020. Central Michigan District Health Department wants to ensure the public knows that colorectal cancer is preventable with early detection.

The death rate from colorectal cancer has been dropping in both men and women for several decades likely due to many reasons. The percentage of U.S. adults aged 50 to 75 years who were up-to-date with colorectal cancer screening increased by 1.4 percentage points, from 67.4% in 2016 to 68.8% in 2018. This represents an additional 3.5 million adults screened for colorectal cancer. Colorectal polyps are being found earlier by screening and removed before they can develop into cancers or are being found when the disease is easier to treat. In addition, treatment for colorectal cancer has improved over the last few decades. As a result, there are now more than one million survivors of colorectal cancer in the United States. There are often no symptoms when colorectal cancer is first developing which means it can only be detected through regular early screening.

Being over age 50, having a family history of colorectal cancer, having a history of colon polyps or inflammatory bowel disease, and having a history of certain cancers are all 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 starting at the age of 50. Your doctor may recommend earlier screening if you have one or more risk factors. Call your medical care provider and ask about his/her recommendations for screening.

Other factors, such as obesity, long-time eating of red meat or processed meat, tobacco use and moderate alcohol use can increase risks of colorectal cancer. Lifestyle modifications, such as eating fruits, vegetables and high fiber foods, exercising regularly, not smoking, limiting your alcohol consumption and maintaining a healthy body weight, have been reported to decrease the risks of colorectal cancer.

If you have been diagnosed with colorectal cancer, your cancer care team will discuss your treatment options with you. There are several options for treating colorectal cancer but the most successful option starts with catching it early by participating in prevention screenings.

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. Visit our website at www.cmdhd.org, LIKE Central Michigan District Health Department on Facebook and follow us on Twitter @CMiDHD.

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*To request an interview, please visit our website (cmdhd.org) and fill out the Media Interview Request Form.*

**Sources**:

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