

# Colorectal Cancer



## Dickinson-Iron District Health Department

*"Serving the community since 1936 in Health Protection, Health Education and Disease Prevention"*

### STATISTICS:

- Colorectal cancer is the 2<sup>nd</sup> leading cause of cancer-related death in Michigan, with only lung cancer taking the lives of more men and women.
- During 2002, 2,676 men and 2,741 women in Michigan were diagnosed with invasive colorectal cancer.
- In 2003, 951 men and 965 women in Michigan died from colorectal cancer.
- Men are more likely than women to develop colorectal cancer and die. African Americans have higher colorectal cancer diagnosis and death rates than people of other racial groups.
- Michigan ranks 33<sup>rd</sup> in the nation in colorectal cancer deaths.

## Cancer Prevention and Control Month

### SERVICES AVAILABLE:

**Dickinson-Iron District Health Department**  
**(906) 774-1868 or (906) 265-9913**  
[www.didhd.org](http://www.didhd.org)

### PREVENTION STRATEGIES:

How can you stop colorectal cancer before it begins?

#### Step 1: Screening can find a polyp before it becomes cancer

- Have a fecal occult blood test every year.
  - **OR**
- Have a flexible sigmoidoscopy every 5 years.
  - **OR**
- Have a fecal occult blood test every year AND flexible sigmoidoscopy every 5 years.
  - **OR**
- Have a colonoscopy every 10 years.
  - **OR**
- Have a double-contrast barium enema every 5 years.

#### Step 2: Live healthy. Eat right and be active.

- Eat high fiber, low fat diets. Whole grains are a plus. Avoid french fries.
- Kick the butt! Smokers are at higher risk of colorectal cancer.
- Try to take 10,000 steps a day. Being active is being healthy.

## **WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW:**

Colorectal cancer is the 2<sup>nd</sup> leading cause of cancer-related death in Michigan for men and women combined. Most colorectal cancers can be traced back to a polyp, a non-cancerous growth in the inner walls of the colon and rectum. The longer a polyp goes undetected, the greater the chance that it will become cancerous.

Who is at risk of developing colorectal cancer? Everyone. Men and women of all races are susceptible. The primary risk factor for colorectal cancer is increasing age, with more than 90% of cases being found in persons over the age of 50. A family history of colorectal cancer or colorectal polyps also increases the risk of developing colorectal cancer.

At the disease's earliest stages, there are virtually no symptoms. As it progresses, changes to the bowel movement patterns, bleeding, and abdominal discomfort may occur.

It is important to diagnose colorectal cancer early. With early diagnosis, treatment is possible and often successful. As the disease develops, it spreads through the large intestine and invades other organ systems. Survival from colorectal cancer is greatly decreased when the cancer has spread.

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## **RESOURCES:**

### **American Cancer Society**

[www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)

### **Cancer Research and Prevention Foundation**

[www.preventcancer.org](http://www.preventcancer.org)

### **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**

[www.cdc.gov/cancer/screenforlife](http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/screenforlife)

### **Colon Cancer Alliance**

[www.ccalliance.org](http://www.ccalliance.org)

### **Michigan Cancer Consortium**

[www.michigancancer.org](http://www.michigancancer.org)

### **National Cancer Institute – Colon and Rectal Cancer**

[www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/types/colon-and-rectal](http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/types/colon-and-rectal)

### **National Colorectal Cancer Research Alliance**

[www.eifoundation.org/national/nccra/splash](http://www.eifoundation.org/national/nccra/splash)

### **National Colorectal Cancer Roundtable**

[www.nccrt.org](http://www.nccrt.org)

