

Essential Ingredients *Your monthly Anthem Alliance wellness newsletter*

Colon Cancer Awareness Month

Colon cancer is cancer of the large intestine or rectum. It is the third most common cancer among both men and women in the United States — as well as the second leading cause of cancer-related deaths.

Over our lifetimes, about one in 20 of us will develop colon cancer. Regular screenings are important because when caught early, survival rates are better than 90 percent.

Who Is At Risk?

People at increased risk for colon cancer need to start screening at an earlier age and get tested more frequently than other people. You are at an increased risk if you

- Have a personal or family history of cancer or polyps
- Are older than 50
- Are African American or a Jewish person of Eastern European heritage
- Have a history of inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis
- Possess genetic syndromes, like familial adenomatous polyposis (FAP) or hereditary non-polyposis colorectal cancer (also known as Lynch syndrome)

Lifestyle Factors That Increase Risk

- Lack of regular physical activity
- Low fruit and vegetable intake
- A low-fiber and high-fat diet
- Overweight and obesity
- Alcohol consumption
- Tobacco use

Signs & Symptoms

Colon cancer and precancerous polyps don't always cause symptoms early on however, don't wait for symptoms to be tested for colon cancer. The most likely warning signs include:

- Abdominal discomfort and bloating
- Changes in bowel movements (persistent constipation or diarrhea, a feeling of not being able to empty the bowel completely, an urgency to move the bowels, rectal cramping, or rectal bleeding)
- Dark patches of blood in or on stool; or long, thin, "pencil stools"
- Pelvic pain, which occurs at later stages of the disease
- Unexplained fatigue, loss of appetite, and/or weight loss

Prevention

SCREENING BY THE NUMBERS



60%
increase in
screening rates
since 2010



1 in 3
adults ages 50-75 are
still not getting screened
as recommended

Screenings: It can save your life!

Prevention is the best medicine when it comes to cancer. Getting screened and finding early signs gives you the best head start on treatment.

The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) recommends screening for colorectal cancer using:

- High-sensitivity fecal occult blood testing
- Sigmoidoscopy
- Colonoscopy

 **Make That**
Call
FOR COLON CANCER
SCREENING

Diet and Exercise

- **Eat a plant-based diet.** A diet high in vegetables, fruits and whole grains lowers your risk of colon cancer. Eating a lot of red meat or processed meat may raise your risk.
- **Get moving.** An active lifestyle reduces your risk.
- **Maintain a healthy weight.** Being very overweight or obese increases the risk of colon cancer, especially in men.
- **Limit alcohol.** Heavy drinking has been linked to colorectal cancer. Have no more than one (for women) or two (for men) drinks a day.
- **Don't smoke.** Smoking makes you more likely to develop colon cancer.
- **Get Enough Calcium and Vitamin D.** Evidence shows that getting enough calcium and vitamin D can help protect against colon cancer. Aim for 1,000 to 1,200 milligrams per day of calcium and about 1,000 international units (IU) per day of vitamin D.



Endometriosis is a disease of the female reproductive system that affects approximately 1 in 10 women in their 30's and 40's worldwide. Endometriosis occurs when the endometrial cells, or uterine lining cells, exist outside of the uterus.

Endometriosis can have a devastating impact on quality of life due to symptoms such as:

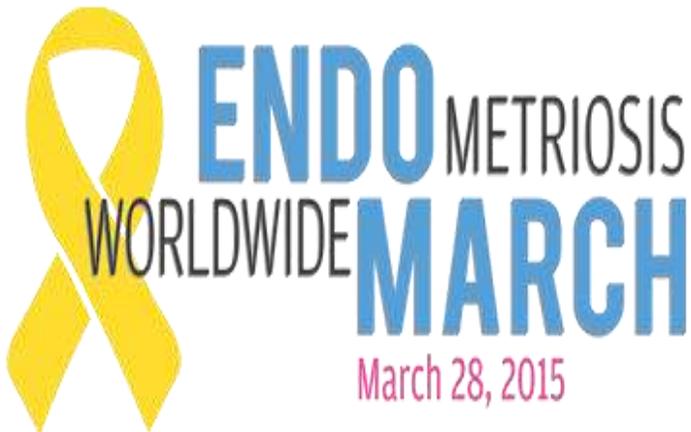
- **Pain-** the most common symptom: (menstrual cramps, lower back and pelvis, during sex)
- **Bleeding or spotting** between menstrual periods
- **Infertility**
- **Stomach (digestive) problems.** These include diarrhea, constipation, bloating, or nausea, especially during menstrual periods

If you or your loved one has any of the following symptoms please see your doctor for treatment options.



Join the worldwide march.

[Click here](#) to find a local team!



Healthy Snacking

Snacks can be a fun and valuable part of a person's healthful eating plan, but they can also add unwanted calories, sugar, sodium and fat.

Snacking has become a routine part of our day where we could eat upwards of 600 calories a day in snacks alone.

This could make up about one third of our total daily intake. If chosen wisely, they can help boost your metabolism, provide consistent energy throughout the day and help in weight management. Make your snacking count!

Snacking Ideas:

Whole Raw Nuts



A small handful of nuts can pack your diet with filling protein, fiber, unsaturated fats, and important vitamins and minerals.

Hummus Dippers



Put 2 tablespoons of your favorite hummus in the bottom of the container, stick in a handful of vegetable stick.

Whole Fruit Fresh Fruit



Enjoy seasonal fruit throughout the year.

Yogurt



Try 8 ounces of low-fat plain yogurt (140 calories) with fresh fruit.

Learn more about colon cancer and endometriosis:

- Cancer.org
- CDC-Colon cancer
- SisterGirlFoundation
- EatRight.org