

March is Colon Cancer Awareness Month

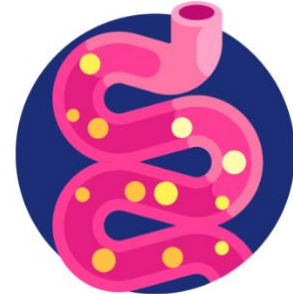
Nancy Kelly LPN, the Colon Cancer Chick & Wellness Team Member

Imagine a cancer that can be cured BEFORE it becomes cancer.

It is colon cancer!

In the United States colon cancer is the third most frequently diagnosed type of cancer.

Benign growths, or polyps, can develop in the large intestine. Polyps do not hurt, or bleed or give other symptoms. But if not removed, they often grow and become cancerous.



Rectal bleeding has many causes but should always be checked by a gastroenterologist. Indian River County has many very qualified GI doctors.

The recommendation for screening is now age 45. Why? Because physicians are finding more colon cancers in younger people. Your family history plays a big part. If polyps or colon cancer is in your family, you want to get your first colonoscopy sooner rather than later.

What is screening? Simple: getting a colonoscopy. It is relatively easy, and a lot better than going through cancer. Are you too embarrassed to have a colonoscopy? Get over it. Your dignity will be respected. You will be given a light anesthetic; you won't feel a thing, and you wake up quickly and feeling good. The risks of a colonoscopy complication are very low. If you get an "all clear" diagnosis, you most likely won't need another scope for 5-10 years.

Prevention is better than the cure, right? Follow these tips:

FIBER FIBER FIBER! Be honest, do you really get enough fiber in your diet? Salad (lettuce) is not fiber. When fiber meets the bacteria in the colon, it makes butyrate. Butyrate helps our bowel to stay healthy, and unwanted particles are pushed out.

Vegetables, fruits, whole grains are fiber. You should be eating 30-35 grams of fiber a day. Sound daunting? Eat ½ cup of Fiber One cereal a day. That is 14 grams of fiber! (The Publix brand is less expensive and has 1 more gram of fiber.) Mix it with yogurt, other cereals; make a trail mix for added variety. Have an apple or a pear with lunch and cooked veggies with dinner and you are golden!

Do not smoke. Drink alcohol in moderation. Exercise.

Please [seek me out](#) if you have any questions.

Allow your faith to override your fears!