



Eastern Idaho Public Health

1250 Hollipark Drive • Idaho Falls, ID 83401 • Phone: (208) 522-0310 • www.EIPH.Idaho.gov

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 11, 2015

Contact: Mimi Taylor, PIO
Office: (208) 533.3155
Cell: (208) 521.6722

March is Colon Cancer Awareness Month **Eastern Idaho Public Health promotes the importance of screening**

(Idaho Falls, ID) - Colon cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in Idaho. Getting people to talk about colon cancer can be difficult, but Eastern Idaho Public Health (EIPH) aims to do just that during National Colon Cancer Awareness Month. Colon Cancer Awareness Month is a great time to openly discuss the disease and learn what can be done to prevent it. Understanding risk factors, symptoms and screening options could mean the difference between life and death.

Your risk of getting colon cancer increases as you get older. More than 90% of cases occur in people who are 50 years old or older. Other risk factors include having:

- Inflammatory bowel disease, Crohn's disease, or ulcerative colitis.
- A personal or family history of colorectal cancer or colorectal polyps.
- Certain genetic syndromes.

Lifestyle factors that may contribute to an increased risk of colon cancer include lack of regular physical activity, smoking, alcohol consumption, low fruit and vegetable intake, a low-fiber and high-fat diet, and being overweight or obese.

Colon polyps and colon cancer don't always cause symptoms, especially at first. Someone could have polyps or colon cancer and not know it. That is why getting screened regularly is so important.

- more -

If you have symptoms, they may include:

- Blood in or on your stool (bowel movement).
- Stomach pain, aches, or cramps that don't go away.
- Losing weight and you don't know why.

If you have any of these symptoms, talk to your healthcare provider. They may be caused by something other than cancer.

Screening tests for colon cancer such as colonoscopies can go a long way toward preventing colon cancer and reducing colon cancer deaths. Results from a recently released study show that removing precancerous growths (polyps) spotted during a colonoscopy can cut the risk of dying from colon cancer in half. A colonoscopy can also detect colon cancer in its early stages, when treatment is most effective. "Colon cancer screening saves lives," says Mimi Taylor, Cancer Prevention Program Manager at EIPH.

If you have any questions about colon cancer, please contact Mimi at (208) 533-3155 or mimi_taylor@EIPH.Idaho.gov. The following website also has great information about colon cancer:

- <http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/colorectal/index.htm>

About Eastern Idaho Public Health

Eastern Idaho Public Health (EIPH) is one of seven local health districts throughout the state of Idaho. We serve eight counties including: Bonneville, Clark, Custer, Fremont, Jefferson, Lemhi, Madison, and Teton. The mission of Eastern Idaho Public Health is: to prevent disease, disability and premature death; to promote healthy lifestyles; and to protect and promote the health and quality of our environment.

###