

NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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Colon Cancer Awareness Month

March is Colon Cancer Awareness Month and Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department encourages preventive action. Every year, about 140,000 Americans are diagnosed with colorectal cancer and more than 50,000 people die from it according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. This is the second leading cause of cancer death in the United States. Colon cancers almost always develop from precancerous polyps.

“Colon cancer is 90% curable if it is found early,” states Bev Powers, Public Health Nurse. “Men and women 50 and older should be screened regularly. This is a simple screening that can save lives.” Sixty percent of deaths from colon cancer could be prevented through regular screenings.

Suggested actions for those 50 years or older include:

- Fecal Occult Blood Test (FOBT) every year to detect blood in the stool.
- Colonoscopy every ten years to find polyps.
- Have polyps removed to prevent cancer from starting or spreading.

Hemoccult Colon Screening kits are available at Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department for three dollars (\$3) per kit. Stop at the office located at 404 West 10th Street, one block north of Arby's to pick up your kit and then return it to our office for testing.

“Everyone can make changes in their lifestyle to prevent colorectal cancer,” explains Melissa Propp, Public Health Nurse. “Eat a healthy diet with plenty of fruits, vegetables and fiber; get active, drink in moderation and if you smoke, quit.”

SWNPHD serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Perkins and Red Willow counties. Call 308-345-4223 for more information. SWNPHD is located at 404 West 10th (one block north of Arby's) in McCook. More information can also be found on Facebook or Twitter and our website at www.swhealth.ne.gov.

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