



March is Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

*Regional Cancer Partnership of Illinois raising
awareness, offering free testing kits*

As part of colorectal cancer awareness month, a group of area health agencies and health departments along with several local hospitals in central Illinois are offering free colorectal screening kits in March. The offering of the screening kits has been organized by the Regional Cancer Partnership of Illinois (RCPII) to raise awareness about the importance of cancer screening and prevention. Regularly scheduled screening can not only detect cancer at an early stage, when it is treatable and beatable, but can even prevent cancer from developing when precancerous polyps are found and removed before they become cancer.

The screening kits will be provided to hospitals in Lincoln, Quincy, Litchfield, Springfield, and Jacksonville. Participants will need to fill out a short questionnaire and permission form. After completing the screening at home, individuals will mail back the kit to learn if they might be at risk for colorectal cancer.

The locations, dates and contacts for the agencies and hospitals involved with the free screening are:

- March 16 through 20, Logan County Health Department in Lincoln, 109 3rd Street, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m., 217-735-2317
- Tuesday, March 17 - Blessing Cancer Center in Quincy, North Entrance (Oak Street), screening kits will be available noon - 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. - 6 p.m., 217-223-8400 ext. 7718
- Monday, March 23 - St. Francis Hospital in Litchfield, 1215 Franciscan Drive, in the visitor parking lot from 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. and at the colorectal cancer program in the evening, 217-324-8206
- Wednesday, March 25 - Memorial Medical Center in Springfield at the Sangamon County Health Department (back parking lot), 2501 Dirksen Parkway, free testing kit drive through 3:30-5:30 p.m., 217-535-3100
- Wednesday, March 25 - Prairie Heart Institute at St. John's Hospital in Springfield, Dove Conference Center, 619 E. Mason Street. Educational program 12- 1 p.m., free testing kits will be handed out before and after the program at the same location 11:30 a.m.- 1:30 p.m., 217-544-6464 ext. 45591
- Wednesday, March 25 - Passavant Area Hospital in Jacksonville, 1600 W. Walnut, drive through 9 a.m.- 11 a.m., educational program in Meeting Room 5, noon - 1 p.m., 217-245-9541, ext. 3296



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More details about the screening kits are available on the RCPIIL Web site – www.rcpil.org. Information is available by calling the phone numbers listed. The screening kits have been donated by Beckman Coulter.

The best method to detect colorectal cancer is a colonoscopy and the screening kits do not substitute for that procedure.

An estimated 148,810 new cases of colorectal cancer will be diagnosed in the United States. Colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of death due to cancer for men and women combined (lung cancer is the first). While colorectal cancer is one of the most common, and yet preventable, cancers someone dies from colorectal cancer every 9.3 minutes and more lives are lost each year to colorectal cancer than to breast cancer and AIDS combined. More information is available from the American Cancer Society, www.cancer.org.

The RCPIIL first began meeting in 2001 and was reorganized in 2006. It is focused on cancer control, prevention and education in central Illinois. The members are – American Cancer Society, Blessing Hospital, Capitol Community Health Center, Central Illinois Hematology/Oncology, Illinois Department of Public Health, Logan County Health Department, Memorial Medical Center, Mia Ware Foundation, Passavant Area Hospital, Sangamon County Department of Public Health, Sangamon County Medical Society, SimmonsCooper Cancer Institute at SIU School of Medicine, Springfield Clinic, Springfield Urban League, St. Francis Hospital, the Cancer Institute at St. John's Hospital and Breast Cancer Network of Strength-Illinois Affiliate.

For more information, contact: Shayne Squires, American Cancer Society, 217-523-4503 or the PR offices for the hospitals listed

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