

NEWS RELEASE

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RCPIIL Announces March Events for Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

March is Colorectal Cancer Month and the Regional Cancer Partnership of Illinois (RCPIIL) has organized its annual colorectal cancer screening program which includes the distribution of screening kits in several central Illinois locations.

The home screening kits will be available three times in Springfield as well as Lincoln, Litchfield, Jacksonville and Quincy. For two of the times in Springfield, area residents can pick up test kits without having to leave their vehicles.

After completing the screening at home, individuals will mail back their kit to learn if they might be at risk for colorectal cancer. Participants will be asked to fill out a short questionnaire and consent form.

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

- Noon -- 1 p.m. Tuesday, March 30, Lunch with the Doctor, Dove Center at St. John's Hospital, 619 E. Mason;
- 7:30 --10 a.m. Wednesday, March 31, Kick's, 2744 S. 6th St. (drive through); and
- 11 a. m. -- 1:30 p m. Wednesday, March 31, Sangamon County Health Department, 2501 Dirksen Parkway (drive through).

For information about the Springfield events, contact Celeste Wiley, 217-757-7684 weekdays.

Funding for this project/publication was made possible through monies received from the Illinois Department of Public Health. The screening kits do not substitute for a colonoscopy, the best method to detect colorectal cancer.

Regularly scheduled screening can prevent cancer from developing if precancerous polyps are detected and removed before they become cancer, this requires a colonoscopy. Regular screenings can also find cancer in its earliest stages, when it can be treated.

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services at the National Institutes of Health, rates for screening for colorectal cancer are consistently lower than those for other types of cancer, despite the evidence and guidelines that support the value of screening for this disease.

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Colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of death due to cancer for men and women combined. (Lung cancer is the first.) Survival rates for colon and rectum cancer are nearly 90 percent when the cancer is diagnosed before it has extended beyond the intestinal wall, according to "Illinois Fact and Figures 2008-2009" published by the American Cancer Society.

Members of the Regional Cancer Partnership of Central Illinois include: American Cancer Society, Central Counties Health Centers, Illinois Department of Public Health, Logan County Health Department, Mia Ware Foundation in Jacksonville, Passavant Area Hospitals in Jacksonville, Regional Cancer Center Memorial Medical Center, Sangamon County Department of Public Health, Sangamon County Medical Society, SimmonsCooper Cancer Institute at SIU School of Medicine, Springfield Urban League, St. Francis Hospital in Litchfield, St. John's Hospital Cancer Institute and Blessing Hospital in Quincy.

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