



March: Colon Cancer Awareness Month

Plan now to find out if you are at risk...CRC can help!

Screenings save lives: One patient's story

As the second leading cause of cancer death in the United States, colon cancer is a disease that takes many lives but is largely preventable. Additionally, screening tests for colon and rectal cancer can catch the illness early and greatly decrease the amount of treatment needed. Terry R., a patient of Dr. Gowdamarajan's at CRC, was diagnosed with colon cancer last fall. She recently completed treatment

...had the polyps been detected earlier, she might have avoided the extensive treatment regimen she had to endure.

which included transanal surgery, chemotherapy and radiation. "I just turned 52 last August and had seen my primary care doctor for a routine exam at around 49 or 50. He didn't mention anything about a screening test for colon cancer. I came to Colon and Rectal Care Center because I had rectal bleeding," Terry explained.

After an initial exam in the office, Dr. Gowdamarajan knew Terry had a polyp and ordered a screening colonoscopy. When she was diagnosed with cancer, Terry was obviously distraught.

"Dr. Gowdamarajan was very reassuring. I felt that if I had taken better care of myself and gotten a colonoscopy screening when I turned 50, this wouldn't have happened."

As winter winds down and you begin to look forward to warmer weather and the outdoor activities of spring, March also brings with it a reminder to check on your colon health. March is Colon Cancer Awareness Month and at CRC we want to do all we can to assist you in maintaining a healthy colon. Our goal is to help reduce the occurrence of colon cancer diagnoses by educating our patients and friends on the importance of screenings and properly understanding their risk factors.

If you are wondering about your personal risk for developing colon cancer, take a look at this list to determine if you are a candidate for a screening test:

Should I be tested for Colon and Rectal Cancer?

Yes...if you age 50 or older.

Yes...if you have a personal or family history of colon polyps.

Yes...if you have had chronic inflammatory bowel disease.

Yes...if you experienced a change in bowel habits such as diarrhea, constipation, or narrowing of the stool, that lasts for more than a few days.

Yes...if you have experienced rectal bleeding or bloody stool.

Yes...if you are age 50 or over and have not been tested in the past 5 years.

Men and women are equally at risk for colon cancer. If you have any questions, please contact us at 841-8090 or 1-800-872-5123. We will gladly explain your options for a colorectal screening test and help put your mind at ease.

Terry said Dr. Gowdamarajan reassured her that, "You didn't do this to yourself."

Today, Terry feels that if the polyps had been detected earlier, she might have avoided the extensive treatment regimen she had to endure. However, throughout her battle with the disease, she said Dr. Gowdamarajan's encouragement was "wonderful."

"He would often take the time to simply talk with me in his office,

scheduling time to meet with me even when I didn't need an exam." Terry said. "His moral support was great."

Terry's story could be yours. Don't wait to get screened for colon cancer if you are at risk. The good news is, when it is detected early, the recovery rates are good. For colon cancer that is found and treated at an early stage, there is a 90% recovery rate! Colon cancer doesn't have to devastate your life. Take steps now to protect your good health.



Hope and Healing

Resources for cancer patients

If you or someone you love has been diagnosed with colorectal cancer, these agencies can assist you with educational materials, support and hope.

American Cancer Society
Central IN Area Service Ctr.
6030 W 62nd St
Indianapolis, IN 46278
phone: 317-347-6670
www.cancer.org

The Wellness Community - Central Indiana, Inc.
8465 Keystone Crossing,
Suite 145
Indianapolis, IN 46240
phone: 317-257-1505
www.twc-indy.org

Help for hemorrhoids

Don't let the discomfort slow you down...

If you suffer from hemorrhoids, you know the pain and discomfort associated with the condition can range from a mere nuisance to a serious health problem. Hemorrhoids are swollen veins in your rectum or anus. The type of hemorrhoid you have depends on where it occurs, either internally or externally. Either way, there are a variety of treatment options available, some of which do not involve extensive medical attention.

A few simple steps can help ease the pain of hemorrhoids.

1. Prevent constipation by including more fiber in your diet,



drinking plenty of fluids (except alcohol) and exercising regularly.

Avoid laxatives, except bulk-forming laxatives such as Fiberall, Metamucil, etc. Other types of laxatives can lead to diarrhea, which can worsen hemorrhoids. Also, when you feel the need to have a bowel movement, don't wait too long to do so.

2. Relieve the pain with warm baths. Use ice packs to relieve swelling. You can also take acetaminophen (Tylenol), ibuprofen (Motrin) or aspirin.

3. Don't use hemorrhoid medicine without talking to your doctor first. CRC can help. There are surgical options available if your hemorrhoids are untreatable with other methods. Don't let hemorrhoids continue to cause you pain. Contact our offices at 841-8090 if you have any questions or concerns.

Your Digestive Health

Dealing with digestion: Preventing painful bloating and excessive gas



None of us like to deal with it, but we all have. Excessive gas can be painful and embarrassing, but how do you prevent it? Often, belching, bloating and flatulence are caused by the foods we eat and the way we eat them. Here are a few tips and tricks to help stave off the uncomfortable problems caused by gas build up in our bodies:

Slow down. Eating and drinking too quickly can cause you to swallow air, which leads to belching.



Find out if you are lactose intolerant. Flatulence is gas created through bacterial action in the bowel that is passed rectally. Most of these passages are harmless and odorless. However, if dairy products seem to be causing you to pass gas with a noticeable smell, you may be lactose intolerant. A doctor can help you to determine if you are and offer solutions to help.



Learn to avoid or reduce your intake of certain foods. This list is not comprehensive, but eating less of these foods should help to reduce gas: Broccoli, baked beans, cabbage, carbonated drinks, cauliflower, chewing gum and hard candy.