

Quad City Gastroenterologists Combine Forces To Raise Colon Cancer Awareness in March

Written by Jake Glimco

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Quad Cities, USA (February 17, 2012) –March is Colon Cancer Awareness Month and staff from Digestive Disease Center, Gastroenterology Consultants, Digestive Disease Specialists and Trinity Medical Center have joined forces, once again, to form the Colon Cancer Free QCA Coalition. This group consists of Gastroenterologists and other health care professionals who have come together to promote one simple message, Colonoscopies save lives. The physicians will be meeting with various groups and family physicians this month to discuss the important role colonoscopies play in the early detection of colon cancer.

“Colon cancer is easily preventable by the removal of precancerous polyps during a screening colonoscopy. If cancer is detected during a colonoscopy, it is easily curable in the early stages, as opposed to cancers that are detected at later stages which are often lethal. These two facts make screening colonoscopy a no-brainer in maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Please make sure you and all of your loved-ones get screened, since everyone is at risk of developing this common cancer,” says Dr. Arvind Movva, Gastroenterology Consultants.

In addition to spreading general awareness, Colon Cancer Free QCA will be working with Good Samaritan Clinic in Moline to provide free colonoscopies to a number of uninsured patients. Doctors, nurses, and support staff, from each practice, have volunteered their services to make this free screening possible. The exams will be performed free of charge for patients who have been previously identified as being at a high-risk for colon cancer by the Good Samaritan Clinic.

Each year, over 140,000 Americans are diagnosed with colon cancer making it the third most common cancer diagnosis in the United States. “Colorectal cancer is the 2nd leading cause of

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cancer death among men and women in the U.S. However, if we can raise awareness of the role a colonoscopy can play in the prevention of colon cancer, we can decrease the mortality from colorectal cancer significantly in our area”, says Dr. Linda Tong of Digestive Disease Specialists.

Dr. Sreenivas Chintalapani of The Center for Digestive Health states, "The need for colorectal cancer screening is obvious with 150,000 new cases a year and 50,000 deaths. The technology and skills to detect and prevent colon cancer are available to most of us. It's just that that we need to get ourselves to your gastroenterologist and get your colonoscopy." Colon Cancer remains among the top three cancer killers, even though it is also the most preventable form of deadly cancer.

The most effective means of preventing colon cancer is a colonoscopy. In this procedure, pre-cancerous polyps are removed before they turn to cancer and early cancers are seen and biopsied, often before they cause symptoms. If this cancer is detected early, often before symptoms appear, a person's chance of survival is about 90 percent; however, if a person waits until symptoms develop, this percentage drops dramatically. People with an average risk for colon cancer should be tested at age 50. However, screenings should begin at age 40 if you have a family history of colon cancer or other high risk factors. Colon cancer affects men and women equally, crossing all socio-economic lines.

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