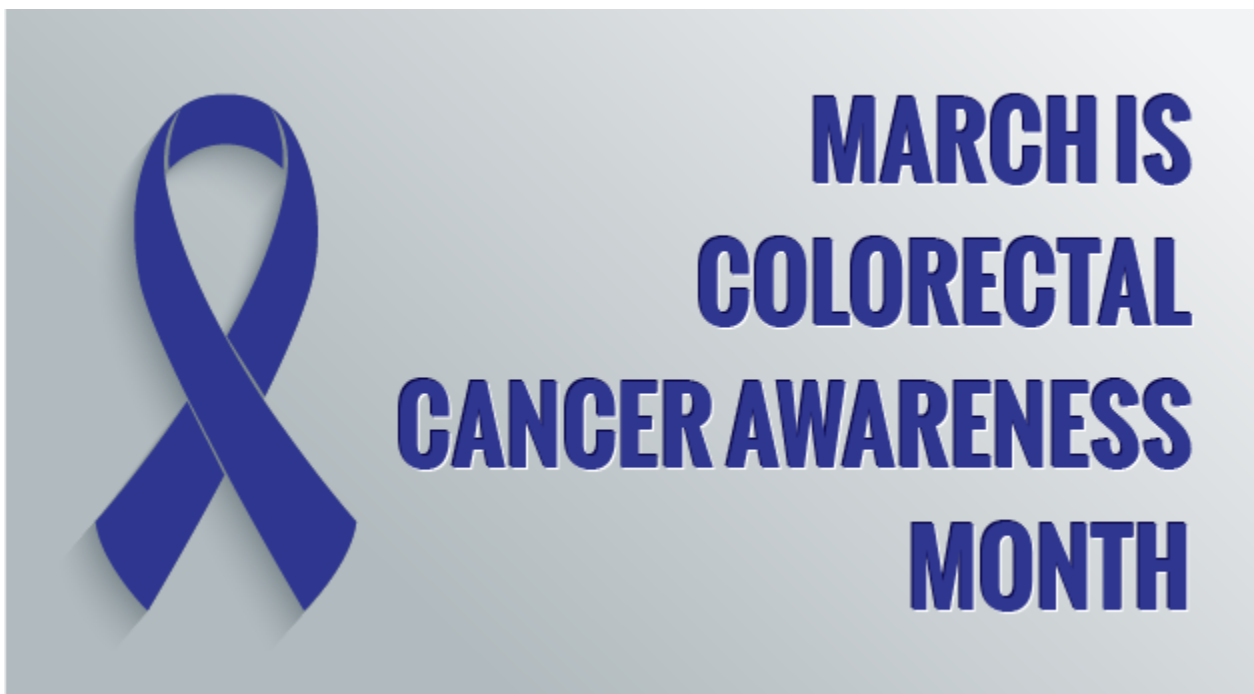


# March is Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

March 7 2017 8:56 AM



ALTON - Colon cancer is the third leading cause of cancer death among men and women in the U.S., but many colon cancers can be *prevented* with regular testing. March is National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month – no better time to learn the facts about colon cancer and get tested. It could save your life.

The American Cancer Society recommends – if you are 50 or older – that you talk with your doctor about colon cancer screening. Only about 60 percent of adults of screening age are up-to-date on their colon cancer screening, and many have never been screened at all.

The Digestive Health Center at Alton Memorial Hospital performs colonoscopies on a regular basis, with three gastroenterologists on staff – Dr. Ahmed Karadaghy, Dr. David Riedel and Dr. Edmundo Rodriguez-Frias. To make an appointment, call 800-392-0936.

Screening can find colon cancer early, before symptoms develop, when it's easier to treat and survival rates are more favorable. Some of the tests can help doctors find growths called polyps that can be removed before they turn into cancer.

What's encouraging is that fewer people have been dying from colon cancer over the past few decades. That's due partly to improvements in screening. However, more than 50,000 deaths from colon cancer are expected this year, accounting for 9 percent of all cancer deaths.

Half of all colon cancer deaths could be prevented, if people got tested regularly. That's why the American Cancer Society, in partnership with several other organizations, has set a goal to increase colon cancer screening rates to 80 percent by 2018. Doing so could save more than 7,000 lives a year.

A healthy diet also plays a role in limiting the chances of developing colon cancer, according to AMH dietitian Naomi Ward. She says that foods made with whole grains rather than processed flour are higher in fiber, vitamins and minerals.

For more information about colon cancer or getting a colonoscopy, visit [cancer.org/colon](https://www.cancer.org/colon)

.