



A CUP OF HEALTH WITH CDC

Colorectal Screening

Vital Signs: Colorectal Cancer Screening, Incidence, and Mortality — United States, 2002–2010

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[Announcer] This podcast is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC — safer, healthier people.

[Dr. Gaynes] Welcome to *A Cup of Health with CDC*, a weekly feature of the *MMWR*, the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. I'm your host, Dr. Robert Gaynes.

Early diagnosis is the key to successfully surviving any type of cancer. It's especially important for colorectal cancer, one of the most commonly diagnosed cancers in the U.S. Every year, it kills about fifty thousand men and women.

Dr. Lisa Richardson is a researcher with CDC's Division of Cancer Prevention and Control. She's joining us today to discuss the importance of colorectal cancer screening. Welcome to the show, Lisa.

[Dr. Richardson] Thank you, Bob.

[Dr. Gaynes] Lisa, why should we be screened for colorectal cancer?

[Dr. Richardson] It's important to be screened for colorectal cancer because it can prevent cancer from developing, as well as find cancers early, when they're easier to treat.

[Dr. Gaynes] At what age should we start getting screened?

[Dr. Richardson] People should start getting screened at age 50. Colorectal cancer is very uncommon before that age.

[Dr. Gaynes] How do they test for this type of cancer?

[Dr. Richardson] There are two types of tests, one test is done to look for blood in the stool and the other test involves a lighted scope, which actually looks at the colon.

[Dr. Gaynes] Lisa, how often should we get tested for colorectal cancer?

[Dr. Richardson] For the test that looks for blood in the stool, that's done every year. For the lighted scope, or endoscopy, that's done every five or 10 years.

[Dr. Gaynes] If a problem is identified, how is it handled?

[Dr. Richardson] If abnormal growths, or polyps, are found, they can be removed and that will prevent cancer from ever developing. If a cancer is found, it depends on the stage. Further treatment may include surgery, radiation therapy, or chemotherapy.

[Dr. Gaynes] Lisa, if colorectal cancer is detected in its early stage through screening, what are the odds of surviving?

[Dr. Richardson] The odds are quite good. More than 90 percent of people are cured if the cancer is found and treated early.

[Dr. Gaynes] Where can listeners get more information about colorectal cancer screening?

[Dr. Richardson] They can go to www.cdc.gov/cancer.

[Dr. Gaynes] Thanks, Lisa. I've been talking today with CDC's Dr. Lisa Richardson about the importance getting screened for colorectal cancer.

Regular testing is recommended for everyone between 50 and 75. If you're over 50, talk to your health care provider about getting screening for colorectal cancer.

Until next time, be well. This is Dr. Robert Gaynes for *A Cup of Health with CDC*.

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO, 24/7.