



## March Health Bulletin

### National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

Colorectal cancer is cancer of the colon or rectum. It is equally common in men and women. With recommended screenings, this cancer can be prevented (by removing polyps before they become cancerous) or detected early, when it can be more easily and successfully treated.

#### Who is at risk?

- men and women ages 50 and older;
- people who use tobacco, are obese, or are sedentary;
- people with a personal or family history of colorectal cancer or benign (not cancerous) colorectal polyps;
- people with a personal or family history of inflammatory bowel disease, such as long-standing ulcerative colitis or Crohn's disease; and
- people with a family history of inherited colorectal cancer.

#### How can you reduce your risk?

- be physically active and exercise regularly;
- maintain a healthy weight;
- eat a high-fiber diet rich in fruits, vegetables, nuts, beans, and whole grains;
- consume calcium-rich foods such as low-fat or skim milk;
- limit red meat consumption and avoid processed meats; and
- don't smoke or drink alcohol excessively.



#### Early Detection

If you are at average risk for colorectal cancer, begin regular screenings at age 50. If you are at greater risk, you may need to begin regular screenings at an earlier age. The best time to get screened is before any symptoms appear. Contact your physician for additional details.

### Would you like to win \$50?

Simply answer the questions below and submit your responses before *Friday, March 30, 2012* to:

Arizona Public Employers Health Pool or Fax: (602) 222-3878  
333 E. Osborn Rd., Suite 300  
Phoenix, AZ 85012

Answer all questions *correctly* and you will be entered into the drawing. **GOOD LUCK!**

What are examples of ways to reduce the risk of colon cancer?

\_\_\_\_\_

What are super foods?

\_\_\_\_\_

At what age should an average-risk individual begin regular colorectal cancer screenings ?

\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Employer: \_\_\_\_\_



## March Health Bulletin



Eating right can put you on the road to wellness, and “superfoods” are an important part of the journey. Superfoods are unprocessed foods found in your local grocery store that can help lower cholesterol, reduce the risk of heart disease and cancer, and just plain make you feel better. Simply incorporate some – or all – of the following superfoods into your diet and watch what happens!

**Whole grains:** Whole grains are high in fiber, so they fill you up for longer periods of time and improve bowel movements. They can help lower cholesterol and blood pressure, too. Look on the ingredients list; 100 percent whole grain should be first.

**Berries:** High in vitamin C and antioxidants, berries help fight cancer. While any berry is great for you, blueberries are hailed as *the* superfood.

**Garlic and onions:** Garlic and onions are good for your heart. Use both in salads and cooking. Onions, in particular, are a great addition to sandwiches.

**Vegetables:** Vegetables provide you with an excellent source of iron and fiber, and are low in fat. Broccoli is an especially healthful vegetable, as it offers potassium, folate, fiber, *and* vitamins A and C.

**Spinach:** Spinach is high in iron, vitamins A and C, and folate. And it’s great in salads! Use with low-fat salad dressing and include carrots, celery, or broccoli. Low-fat cheese or yogurt is also a good choice. For cooking, rather than salt and butter, add herbs and spices to spinach to enhance the flavor.

**Flaxseed:** High in omega 3 fatty acids, flaxseed helps reduce cholesterol and lower your risk of heart disease. Flaxseed may also be good for individuals with irritable bowel syndrome. Flaxseed, available as a supplement and as a regular food item, can be sprinkled on salad or added to pasta. If you choose to consume flaxseed as a supplement, be sure to check with your doctor first.

**Tomatoes:** Lycopene, present in tomatoes, is an antioxidant that helps fight prostate and other cancers. Cooked tomatoes, stewed tomatoes, and tomato sauce are all rich sources of lycopene.

**Olives and olive oil:** Unlike other cooking oils, olive oil is high in monounsaturated fat, which helps ward off heart and other chronic diseases. Use olives on pizza or in salad, and replace butter with olive oil when sautéing or cooking.

**Low-fat yogurt with live cultures:** Yogurt provides a great boost to your immune system. Try mixing in some granola or almonds.

**Fresh fruit:** Fruit is a rich source of fiber, vitamins, and minerals, and contains antioxidants and phytochemicals that help reduce the risk of tumor formation and certain cancers. Fruit is quite versatile and can be added to salads, used to replace fatty side dishes, mixed into a yogurt parfait, or added as a topping to low-fat ice cream or frozen yogurt.

**Nuts (almonds, Brazil nuts, hazelnuts):** Roasted, raw, or toasted, nuts provide a good source of fiber and protein. They also may help reduce your risk of heart disease.

**In addition to eating right, don’t forget to exercise at least 30 minutes most days of the week to maintain weight – up to an hour if you are trying to shed some pounds.**