

# The Optimist

Newsletter of Indian American Cancer Network (IACAN)

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March was National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month. IACAN will help continue in its effort to increase the awareness of Colorectal Cancer by publications, postcards and the upcoming outreach program.

**Colorectal cancer screening saves lives. If everyone aged 50 years old or older is screened regularly, as many as 60% of deaths from this cancer may be avoided.**

## The Facts about Colorectal Cancer:

1. Among cancers that affect both men and women, colorectal cancer—cancer of the colon or rectum—is the second leading cause of cancer-related deaths in the United States.
2. Colorectal cancer also is one of the most commonly diagnosed cancers in the United States.
3. The risk of developing colorectal cancer increases with advancing age. More than 90% of cases occur in people aged 50 or older.
4. It is estimated that as many as 60% of colorectal cancer deaths could be prevented if all men and women aged 50 years or older were screened routinely.
5. In most cases, colorectal cancer develops from precancerous polyps (abnormal growths) in the colon or rectum. Screening tests can find precancerous polyps, so that they can be removed before they turn into cancer. Screening tests also can find colorectal cancer early, when treatment works best.
6. Some studies show that increased physical activity and maintaining a healthy weight may decrease the risk for colorectal cancer.

7. Currently, there is no consensus on the role of diet in preventing colorectal cancer, but medical experts recommend a diet low in animal fats and high in fruits, vegetables, and whole grain products to reduce the risk of other chronic diseases such as coronary artery disease and diabetes.

8. One may need to be tested earlier or more often than other people if:

- You or a close relative have had colorectal polyps or colorectal cancer; or
- You have inflammatory bowel disease.

## Upcoming educational outreach events:

**Topic: 'Colon Cancer: How Screening and early detection can be a life saver'**

**Date: May 22, 2011**

**Place: India House**

**Time: 3-5 PM**

**Speakers-**Ravi S. Mani, M.D., General gastroenterologist in the community

Aakash Gajjar, M.D., Asst.

Professor specialized in colorectal surgery. UTMB, Galveston

Sincerely



IACAN Board

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