

Let's Talk About: Colon Cancer and Screening



ST. PAUL'S HOSPITAL
COMMUNITY FORUMS

What is Colorectal Cancer?

The colon and rectum make up the large intestine, which is sometimes called the bowel. Colorectal cancer can develop from small growths of tissue in the colon and rectum called polyps. If undiscovered and untreated, these growths can become cancerous. This is a serious health risk to your colon and rectum, and can even spread to other organs.

Colorectal Cancer by the Numbers:

- Colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer-related deaths in Canada.
- Colorectal cancer is the fourth most commonly diagnosed cancer.

The most recent estimated statistics for colorectal cancer for 2010 are:

- 22,500 new cases
Men 12,400
Women 10,100
- 9,100 deaths

Lifetime probability of developing colorectal cancer:

Men: 1 in 14
Women: 1 in 15

Risk Factors:

There is no "single cause" for developing this disease, but there are several risk factors that include:

- A family history of colorectal cancer
- Increasing age (risk increases from the age of 50)
- Polyps present in the colon or rectum
- A diet high in fat
- An inactive lifestyle
- Obesity
- Inflammatory bowel disease
- Smoking

- Metabolic syndrome

Signs and Symptoms:

You can have colorectal cancer and not even know it. In its early stages, there may be no symptoms. That's why screening is so important. If colorectal cancer is detected at its earliest stage the chance of survival is over 90%.

Signs and Symptoms can include:

- Change in bowel movements
- Blood in stool
- Abdominal discomfort
- Weight loss for no apparent reason
- Feeling that the bowel is not emptying completely
- Narrower than usual stools
- Feelings of weakness or feeling more tired than normal

Screening

Screening can save lives by detecting colon cancer at an earlier stage when treatment is easier and chances of cure much higher.

Join medical experts from Providence Health Care for monthly community forums at St. Paul's Hospital. Each month features a different health topic with time to pose questions to the experts.

The forums are free and take place the third Wednesday of every month.

7:00 – 9:00 pm
(doors open at 6:30)
New Lecture Theatre
St. Paul's Hospital
1081 Burrard Street

For more information and to register, please email ownyourhealth@providencehealth.bc.ca or call 604-806-8495.

This evening's presentations will be available to view on our website:

www.phcmedicine.ca

Sponsored by:





Colon Cancer CHECK

Colon Check

Colon Check is a population based screening program of The BC Cancer Agency (BCCA) currently being piloted in three communities.

Colon Check uses an easy-to-complete screening test that can be done in the privacy of your own home.

Residents of the following areas are eligible:

- Penticton
- Powell River, includes Lund, Blubber Bay, Gillies Bay, Savary Island, Van Anda and Toba
- Vancouver Downtown Core, residents or those attending family physicians with the following postal code prefixes: V6B, V6C, V6E, V6G, V6Z, V7X, V7Y

Eligible participants will receive a Colon Check test kit in the mail. The test kit allows you to easily and cleanly collect two swabs of stool samples in the privacy of your own home. There are no dietary restrictions and no preparation is required before the test.

Your samples are returned to a local drop-off location and sent to the Provincial Health Services Authority's Central Processing and Receiving Laboratory.

Colon Check uses the fecal immunochemical test (FIT). The FIT can detect blood hidden in your stool, an early sign of non-cancerous polyps and early stage cancer.

The FIT is new to Canada, but has been in use in other countries for several years. The FIT has been shown to detect more colorectal cancers and pre cancerous polyps compared to traditional fecal occult blood tests available in BC.

Colon Cancer Care at St. Paul's Hospital

Providence Health Care works in conjunction with the B.C. Cancer Agency and is a leader in provincial colorectal cancer care improvement initiatives. The services at St. Paul's Hospital include colorectal cancer screening and prevention, sophisticated diagnostic services, and a full spectrum of treatment and care, including surgery.

Highlights of care, research and innovation:

Providence Health Care is the home of the centre of excellence in colorectal surgery with a specific focus on colorectal cancer, inflammatory bowel disease, and other diseases of the lower gastrointestinal tract.

As a University of British Columbia teaching hospital, St. Paul's Hospital is a training centre for gastroenterologists and general surgeons, gastroenterology fellows, advanced therapeutic endoscopy fellows, and it is also a leader in research in patients with colorectal disease.

Our research programs focus on improving outcomes and survival rates in patients with colorectal cancer and inflammatory bowel disease.

St. Paul's Hospital is one of two Lower Mainland centres with physicians fully trained in endoscopic ultrasound to help in detection and staging of gastrointestinal cancers. Patients are referred from all over the Lower Mainland and throughout B.C. for this procedure.

Sources:

BC Cancer Agency

<http://coloncheck.bccancer.bc.ca/default.htm>

Colon Cancer Canada

www.coloncancercanada.ca

The Canadian Cancer Society www.cancer.ca

St. Paul's Hospital is an acute care, teaching and research hospital located in downtown Vancouver. It is home to many world-class medical and surgical programs, including heart and lung services, HIV/AIDS and kidney care.

St. Paul's serves both the local community and patients from across BC and the Yukon. St. Paul's is one of 14 health care facilities in Vancouver operated by Providence Health Care, one of Canada's largest faith-based health care organizations. Providence's 1,000 physicians and 6,000 staff deliver compassionate care to patients and residents in British Columbia while training medical professionals and making innovative advances in research.

To support programs like this at St. Paul's Hospital, please visit www.helpstpauls.com to make a donation to the Department of Medicine Academic Fund.

www.phcmedicine.ca