



SMITHVILLE HOSPITAL AUTHORITY NEWS

March 13, 2003

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Smithville Regional Hospital promotes Colorectal Cancer Awareness

In honor of March's Colorectal Cancer Month, Sridhar Reddy, M.D. in partnership with Smithville Regional Hospital is helping to promote colon cancer awareness. Colorectal cancer (CRC) is cancer of the large intestine, which is made up of the colon and the rectum, and is the second most deadly cancer in the world striking both men and women equally.

The good news about colon cancer is more than 90 percent of deaths from the disease can be prevented with removal of pre-cancerous polyps (growths). This makes it extremely important to consider your risk for the disease and take steps to be tested at the appropriate time.

CRC screening methods that have been evaluated directly by medical researchers are the fecal occult blood test, barium enema, flexible sigmoidoscopy and the colonoscopy. Among these screening modalities, the colonoscopy is most recommended and the results are very accurate. This procedure will allow you to have any polyps or tumors removed, if discovered, and perform a biopsy to determine if they are cancerous.

Most early cancers produce no symptoms, which is why screening tests are so important. Some of the following symptoms can indicate the presence of colon cancer, so it is extremely important to see your physician. A change in bowel habits (for example, diarrhea or constipation), rectal bleeding, blood in or on the stool (causing it to be either bright red or very dark in color), stools that are narrower than usual or you have a family history of colon cancer or polyps.

Thanks to a new state law that requires insurance companies to pay for screening for patients who are over 50 and have a normal risk, your insurance company should cover colorectal screening tests. Medicare patients are also covered for screening exams. Make sure to contact your insurance company before having the colon screening test performed.

For more complete information concerning this topic, please contact your personal physician.

SIDE BAR: Dr. Sridhar Reddy has performed this procedure for more than ten years and has found that most patients under going colon screening are happy they decided to have the test performed. Dr. Reddy offices at 2911 Medical Arts Street, Suite 9B Austin, Texas 78705, and Bastrop Medical Center at 441 Hwy 71 West, Bastrop, Texas 78602. Dr. Reddy is a courtesy medical staff member at Smithville Regional Hospital and you can reach him at 512-474-6321.