



**FIFTY OR OLDER?
GET SCREENED FOR
COLON CANCER.**

NATIONAL COLORECTAL CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

Dear Editor,

America is making progress in the fight against colorectal cancer. However, it still remains the third leading cause of cancer death in both men and women in the United States.

Many people do not realize that simply aging can put you at higher risk for developing colon cancer and that early stage colon cancer doesn't usually cause symptoms. But there are steps you can take to reduce your risk for the disease.

Colorectal cancer is one of only a few cancers that can be prevented because colorectal cancer screening allows doctors to find and remove hidden growths (called "polyps") before they become cancer. Removing polyps can prevent cancer altogether.

Colon cancer screening tests can also detect cancer at an earlier, more treatable stage. Unfortunately, nearly half of all Americans are not getting the recommended screenings they need. Many deaths expected from colorectal cancer this year could be avoided with wider use of proven screening tests.

Screening saves lives. During National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month this March, I hope members of our community will become more aware of the need to get screened for colorectal cancer. Once you turn 50 it is important that you talk to your doctor about getting screened regularly for colon cancer. Talk to your doctor sooner if you have a family history of the disease or other condition that puts you at increased risk.

I urge our community to join me in proudly wearing the Blue Star symbol this March and year round as a reminder to everyone about the importance of getting screened, starting at age 50. The Blue Star represents the eternal memory of people whose lives have been lost to colorectal cancer and the hope for a future free of the disease. Contact groups like the Colon Cancer Alliance, Fight Colorectal Cancer or the American Cancer Society to get Blue Star pins and show your support. Each time you see the Blue Star, remember and share the facts – colorectal cancer is preventable, treatable and beatable.

For more information, visit (insert your website address here) or www.NCCRT.org.

Sincerely,
Your name