

March is Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

Colorectal cancer is unique in the medical world – it can actually be prevented if detected early, before cancerous polyps have a chance to grow and spread. When found early, treatment can be very effective.

Colorectal cancer is the second leading cancer killer of Kansans. Men and women age 50 to 75 or who have a family history of the disease are encouraged to be screened. Recommended screening tests include the Fecal Occult Blood Test (FOBT) every two years, and sigmoidoscopy and colonoscopy every ten years.

While screening rates are increasing nationwide, studies show screening rates are lower among racial and ethnic minorities compared to whites, and among those without health insurance, with low income, and with less than a high school education. Screening is covered by Medicare and most health insurance plans. If you are 50 or older, talk to your doctor about screening.

In support of colorectal cancer awareness, the Hodgeman County Health Department is pleased to offer free fecal occult blood test kits, come by the Health Department, Courthouse, to pick up your free test kit. Call the Health Department at 357-8736 for questions.

The statewide 2011 March Colorectal Cancer Awareness Campaign is supported by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) Cancer Section, American Cancer Society (ACS) Kansas Chapter, Kansas Association of Gastroenterologists (KAGI) and the Kansas Cancer Partnership. For more information about colorectal cancer and Kansas cancer resources, visit www.cancerkansas.org.