



Cancer Support Group NEWSLETTER

THE MISSION OF THE BERRIEN COUNTY CANCER SERVICE:

To provide free skilled home nursing services, equipment, information and supplies at cost for cancer patients and their families in Berrien County.

December 2008

(269) 429-3281 or (269) 683-7460

VOLUME XVII ISSUE XII

The **BERRIEN COUNTY CANCER SUPPORT GROUP** is a group for patients, family members and care givers. Come share successes, feelings, fears and practical methods of coping with the physical and emotional aspects of living with the diagnosis of cancer.

Give Lavishly, Live Abundantly

The more you give, the more you get
The more you laugh, the less you fret
The more you do unselfishly
The more you live abundantly.

The more of everything you share
The more you'll always have to spare,
The more you love, the more you'll find
That life is good and friends are kind.

For only what we give away
Enriches us from day to day.
So let's live Christmas through the year
And fill the world with love and cheer.

Author Unknown



what matters.™

Colorectal Cancer

Via: NCI

Colorectal cancer is a disease in which malignant (cancer) cells form in the tissues of the colon or the rectum.

The colon is part of the body's digestive system. The digestive system removes and processes nutrients (vitamins, minerals, carbohydrates, fats, proteins, and water) from foods and helps pass waste material out of the body. The digestive system is made up of the mouth, throat, esophagus, stomach, and the small and large intestines. The first 6 feet of the large intestine are called the large bowel or colon. The last 6 inches are the rectum and the anal canal. The anal canal ends at the anus (the opening of the large intestine to the outside of the body).

Cancer that begins in the colon is called colon cancer, and cancer that begins in the rectum is called rectal cancer. Cancer that affects either of these organs may also be called colorectal cancer.

Colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of death from cancer in the United States.

The number of new colorectal cancer cases and the number of deaths from colorectal cancer are decreasing a little bit each year.

Finding and treating colorectal cancer early may prevent death from colorectal cancer. Screening tests may be used to help find colorectal cancer.

Avoiding risk factors and increasing protective factors may help prevent colorectal cancer.

Most people with a certain risk factor for cancer do not actually get the disease. Doctors cannot always explain why one person gets cancer and another does not. Talk to your doctor or other health care professional about cancer prevention methods that might help you.

The following *risk* factors may increase the risk of colorectal cancer:

Age

The risk of colorectal cancer begins to increase after age 40 and continues to increase as you get older.

Obesity and lack of exercise

Obesity is linked to an increased risk of colorectal cancer. A lifestyle that does not include regular exercise may also be linked to an increased risk of colorectal cancer.

Smoking

Smoking cigarettes is linked to an increased risk of developing colorectal adenomas (noncancerous tumors) and colorectal cancer. Cigarette smokers who have had surgery to remove colorectal adenomas have an increased risk for the adenomas to recur (come back).

Alcohol

Drinking alcoholic beverages may increase the risk of colorectal cancer.

The following *protective* factors may decrease the risk of colorectal cancer:

Hormone replacement therapy

Studies have shown that hormone replacement therapy (HRT) that includes both estrogen and progesterone lowers the risk of colorectal cancer in postmenopausal women. HRT with estrogen alone does not lower the risk. However, hormone use may increase the risk of breast cancer, heart disease, and blood clots.

Polyp removal

Most colorectal polyps are adenomas, which may develop into cancer. The removal of polyps in the colon and rectum may lower the risk of colorectal cancer. Bleeding and infection sometimes occur after polyps are removed during colonoscopy or sigmoidoscopy.

The effect of the following factors on the risk of colorectal cancer is not known:

Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs)

It is not known if the use of nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (such as aspirin, ibuprofen, and naproxen) lowers the risk of colorectal cancer. Studies have shown that nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) lower the risk of colorectal adenomas (noncancerous tumors), but it is not clear if this results in a lower risk of cancerous tumors in the colon and rectum. The use of NSAIDs increases the risk of heart attack and stroke and some can cause bleeding in the stomach and intestines.

Diet

It is not known if a diet low in fat and high in fiber, fruits, and vegetables lowers the risk of colorectal cancer.

Some studies have shown that a diet high in fat, proteins, calories, and meat increases the risk of colorectal cancer, but other studies have not.

Statins

Studies have not shown that taking statins (cholesterol-lowering drugs) affects the risk of colorectal cancer.

Risk Factors

No one knows the exact causes of colorectal cancer. Doctors often cannot explain why one person develops this disease and another does not. However, it is clear that colorectal cancer is not contagious. No one can catch this disease from another person.

Research has shown that people with certain *risk factors* are more likely than others to develop colorectal cancer. A risk factor is something that may increase the chance of developing a disease.

Studies have found the following risk factors for colorectal cancer:

- **Age over 50:** Colorectal cancer is more likely to occur as people get older. More than 90 percent of people with this disease are diagnosed after age 50. The average age at diagnosis is 72.
- **Colorectal *polyps*:** Polyps are growths on the inner wall of the colon or rectum. They are common in people over age 50. Most polyps are benign (not cancer), but some polyps (*adenomas*) can become cancer. Finding and removing polyps may reduce the risk of colorectal cancer.
- **Family history of colorectal cancer:** Close relatives (parents, brothers, sisters, or children) of a person with a history of colorectal cancer are somewhat more likely to develop this disease themselves, especially if the relative had the cancer at a young age. If many close relatives have a history of colorectal cancer, the risk is even greater.
- **Genetic alterations:** Changes in certain *genes* increase the risk of colorectal cancer.
- ***Hereditary nonpolyposis colon cancer* (HNPCC)** is the most common type of inherited (genetic) colorectal cancer. It accounts for about 2 percent of all colorectal cancer cases. It is caused by changes in an HNPCC gene. Most people with an altered HNPCC gene develop colon cancer, and the average age at diagnosis of colon cancer is 44.
- ***Familial adenomatous polyposis* (FAP)** is a rare, inherited condition in which hundreds of polyps form in the colon and rectum. It is caused by a change in a specific gene called APC. Unless FAP is treated, it usually leads to colorectal cancer by age 40. FAP accounts for less than 1 percent of all colorectal cancer cases.

Family members of people who have HNPCC or FAP can have *genetic testing* to check for specific genetic changes. For those who have changes in their genes, health care providers may suggest ways to try to reduce the risk of colorectal cancer, or to improve the detection of this disease. For adults with FAP, the doctor may recommend an operation to remove all or part of the colon and rectum.

- **Personal history of cancer:** A person who has already had colorectal cancer may develop colorectal cancer a second time. Also, women with a history of cancer of the ovary, uterus (endometrium), or breast are at a somewhat higher risk of developing colorectal cancer.
- ***Ulcerative colitis* or *Crohn's disease*:** A person who has had a condition that causes *inflammation* of the colon (such as ulcerative colitis or Crohn's disease) for many years is at increased risk of developing colorectal cancer.
- **Diet:** Studies suggest that diets high in fat (especially animal fat) and low in *calcium*, *folate*, and *fiber* may increase the risk of colorectal cancer. Also, some studies suggest that people who eat a diet very low in fruits and vegetables may have a higher risk of colorectal cancer. However, results from diet studies do not always agree, and more research is needed to better understand how diet affects the risk of colorectal cancer.
- **Cigarette smoking:** A person who smokes cigarettes may be at increased risk of developing polyps and colorectal cancer.

Because people who have colorectal cancer may develop colorectal cancer a second time, it is important to have checkups. If you have colorectal cancer, you also may be concerned that your family members may develop the disease. People who think they may be at risk should talk to their doctor. The doctor may be able to suggest ways to reduce the risk and can plan an appropriate schedule for checkups.

In Loving Memory

During October 2008, Memorial Donations were generously made by and for the following people:

In Memory of Matthew A Beaman

Sam & Lois Cook, Watervliet
Kelm Acubar Company, Benton Harbor
Gregory & Kayleen Schultz, Hartford

In Memory of Warren "Bud" Beezley

Patricia H Beezley, Three Rivers

In Memory of Judy Brady

The Birthday Club
% Mary A Gifford, Niles

In Memory of Kathy Brown

Dick & Joan Stakley, Benton Harbor

In Memory of Larry G Burkett

William & Linda Adcock, Benton Harbor
Robert & Lydia Dearing, St Joseph
Vicky Dunlap, Vicksburg
Shirley Johnson, St Joseph
Robin J Powers, Kalamazoo
Bernie S Powers Jr, Kalamazoo
Elizabeth A Smith, Eaton OH
Barbara L Whitwam, St Joseph

In Memory of Christine A Curry

Thelma Payne, St Joseph

In Memory of Mary Evenson

Mr Gale E Evenson, Genoa City WI

In Memory of Valerie Gelder

Janet L Mack, St Joseph
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In Memory of Jack P Gibson

Joan M Anderson, Orland Park IL
Betty J Gibson, Lakeside
Patricia A Hill, Benton Harbor
Joyce & Denny Sommerfeldt, Hartford

In Memory of Ruth Kesterke

Marjorie Kesterke, Berrien Springs
Sandy Snodgrass, Stevensville

In Memory of Wesley Allen Konkey

Debbie McCartney, Sodus

In Memory of Archie Ludwig

Zan Ballard, Benton Harbor
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Suzanne D Ferguson, Buchanan
Judy Hinkelman St Joseph

In Memory of Austin Murray

Sandy Murray, St Joseph

In Memory of Marian Poorman

Order of the Eastern Star #332
% Sharon McKnight, Niles

In Memory of Colleen Schwanger

Shirley Churchill, Watervliet

In Memory of Leonard Smith

Eugene & Doris Hart, St Joseph
Terry & Janice Mensinger, Baroda
Cathleen V Miles, Galien,
Dorothy Cupp, Galien
Murray, Lois & Patsy Miller, Berrien Springs

In Loving Memory (continued)

In Memory of Bob Sommerfeldt

Carole & Laurie Reed, Eau Claire

In Memory of James Stanage

Tony & Jennifer Key, LaPorte, IN
Bill & Diane Kirk and Fern, Three Oaks
David & Barbara Pittinger, Albany IN
Willard & Martha Steineke, White Pigeon
Rolland & Helen Thorpe, Granger IN
VFW Post 9423 Ladies Aux, Rolling Prairie IN

In Memory of Lorraine Waaso

Clara Horak, Three Oaks
Glenn & Liz Horak, Three Oaks

In Memory of Louise A White

Robert F White, Stevensville

In Your Honor

During October 2008, donations were generously made by and in honor of the following people:

In Honor of Olove Colcord

Janey & Bruce Waterhouse, Niles

In Honor of Joseph Hattenbach and a special young man with leukemia

The Birthday Club % Mary Gifford, Niles

In Honor of Richard & Virginia Kruck

Vicki & Shel Rosenberg, Sodus

In Honor of Clayton Stakley

Dick & Joan Stakley, Benton Harbor

In Honor of Brad Wire

Joan Wire, Stevensville

The Berrien County Cancer Service sends our sincere sympathy to all those who have recently lost loved ones. We thank all of our generous donors. Your donations are very much appreciated and will help cancer patients in Berrien County. Thank You!



Wishing the joys of the seasons

*To all our Friends and their Families
and
Blessings throughout the New Year*

From all of us here at

BCCS.

Claudia

*Ann
Shiloh*

*Witta
☺*

*Barbara
♥
Kathy ☺*

*Henrietta
"Niles"*

Connie

Nancy

Looking Ahead

BCCS SUPPORT GROUP – Stevensville

December 2 – 1:30 p.m.

No Support Group December 16

January 6 & 20 – 1:30 p.m.

BCCS SUPPORT GROUP – Niles

December 9 – 1:30 p.m.

No Support Group December 23

January 13 & 27 – 1:30 p.m.

UOA SUPPORT GROUP – Stevensville

No Support Group December 16

January 20 – 1:30 p.m.

National Colorectal Awareness Month

HELP, HOPE, BELIEVE

DATES TO REMEMBER IN DECEMBER

*Sunday, December 7th – Pearl Harbor Day
Tuesday, December 16th – Chocolate covered
everything Day*

Thursday, December 18th – Underdog Day

Sunday, December 21st – Winter begins

Thursday, December 25th – Christmas Day

Friday, December 26th – National Whiners Day

Wednesday, December 31st – New Years Eve



Please Consider...

The Berrien County Cancer Service, Inc., is a non-profit organization funded primarily by the United Way, private donations and fund-raisers. We receive no Medicare, Medicaid or other insurance payments. To continue our free services to Berrien County cancer patients, we need your help. Any donation is greatly appreciated.

Donations to our General Fund will help balance our current budget. Donations to our Endowment Fund will help guarantee that the Cancer Service will be available for as long as needed. Your contribution to our non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation is tax deductible – an acknowledgment and receipt for tax purposes will be sent.

Please remember us during the up-coming holiday season. Donations can be made in honor of someone or in memory of a loved one. In these instances, we would also like to send acknowledgment to the honoree or next-of-kin so please provide that information when making your donation.

_____ **General Fund** _____ **Endowment Fund**

Your Name _____

Your Address _____

Donation Amount \$ _____

In Honor of _____

Honoree's Address _____

In Memory of _____

Next of Kin's Address _____

Thank you for your generosity!

Berrien County Cancer Service, Inc.
7301 Red Arrow Highway
Stevensville, MI 49127

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
STEVENSVILLE, MI
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OFFICE STAFF: Kathy Karnik (Office Manager) Claudia Brister (Stevensville) Henrietta Hein (Niles)

CANCER SUPPORT GROUP – Stevensville Office

1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month - 1:30 p.m.

Berrien County Cancer Service, Inc.

7301 Red Arrow Highway
Stevensville, MI 49127
Phone: (269) 429-3281 or (269) 465-5257

BREAST CANCER SURVIVORS SUPPORT GROUP

3rd Wednesday of each month - 2:00 p.m.

First Baptist Church

1446 E. Main Street
Niles, MI 49120
Phone: (269) 683-2959

CANCER SUPPORT GROUP – Niles

2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month – 1:30 p.m.

Niles Senior Center

1109 Bell Road
Niles, MI 49120
Phone: (269) 683-7460

THE CANCER CONNECTION CAFE

1st Wednesday of each month

First United Methodist Church

132 S. Oak Street
Buchanan, MI 49107
Phone: (269) 695-2706

CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

2nd Thursday / month – 5:30 - 7:00 p.m.

Oncology Care Associates

820 Lester Avenue
St. Joseph, MI 49085
Phone: (269) 985-0029