Consider This 2013 Health Resolution If You'll Be 50 This Year

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If you're turning 50 this year, you may want to consider adding a colorectal cancer screening to your New Year to-do list. The reason is simple. Recent studies confirmed that screening contributes to decreased colorectal cancer death rates, according to the American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy (ASGE).

Here are the facts. Colorectal cancer is the third most commonly diagnosed cancer in men and women and the third leading cause of cancer-related deaths in the United States. What's more, because the disease disproportionately affects African Americans, some experts suggest that black folks should begin screening at age 45. Doctors also offer the same advice to people with the following risk factors: a family history of colorectal polyps (fleshy growths on the inside of the colon), colorectal cancer, inflammatory bowel disease, type 2 diabetes and factors relating to diet, weight, physical inactivity, smoking and alcohol use, among other lifestyle habits.

The ASGE advises people to discuss their risk factors with their doctor to determine when they should begin colorectal cancer screening and how often they should be screened.

Doctors consider colorectal cancer a "silent killer" because often there are no symptoms of the disease until it is too late to treat the condition. Doctors also stress that even people who lead a healthy lifestyle can still develop polyps and cancer. Physicians also urge all men and women, age 50 or over, to discuss colorectal cancer screening with their doctor.

The preferred screening test is called a colonoscopy and is a preventive exam that finds and removes precancerous polyps during the examination. People who are at average risk with normal colonoscopy results don't usually need another exam for 10 years.

Both African Americans and Latinos are far more likely than whites to develop polyps in the colon that can lead to cancer. Click here to read more.

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http://beta.docker.realhealthmag.com/article/Colorectalcancer-AfricanAmericans-colonoscopy-23336-5117