Colorectal cancer screenings save lives. Regular screenings, beginning at age 45, is key to preventing the disease.

Colorectal cancer affects both men and women and is the second leading cause of cancer deaths in the United States. March marks National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month, a time to highlight risks and symptoms.

Men and women ages 45-75 should be screened for colorectal cancer regularly. Those older than 75 should ask their doctor if they should be screened and how often, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

“Screenings allow your doctor to find pre-cancerous polyps. That’s good because those polyps can then be removed before possibly becoming cancerous,” said Cynthia Ripsin, MS, MPH, MD, medical director for Coastal Health & Wellness (CHW). “Polyps are abnormal growths and over time may turn into cancer.”

One screening option is the fecal immunochemical test (FIT) screening. This screening tests for hidden blood in the stool, a symptom of colorectal cancer. CHW offers FIT screenings to insured and uninsured patients. Uninsured patients who have positive test results also qualify for a free colonoscopy.

Each year, an estimated 140,000 Americans are diagnosed with colorectal cancer with more than 50,000 dying from the disease. Risk for the disease increases with age. More than 90 percent of colorectal cancers occur in people who are 50 years old or older, according to the CDC.

“I can’t stress enough how important it is to get regular screenings. Not only could pre-cancerous polyps be found and removed, early cancer can be found while it’s still early and treatment is most effective,” Ripsin said.

Risks include a personal or family history of colorectal polyps or colorectal cancer. However, colon cancer is the third most common cancer, excluding skin cancer, in the United States so even if no one in your family has ever had colon cancer you still are at risk. Other risk factors include Crohn’s disease, ulcerative colitis and genetic syndromes like familial adenomatous polyposis or hereditary nonpolyposis colorectal cancer.

Symptoms may include blood in or on stool, stomach pain...
National Doctor’s Day

March 30 celebrates National Doctor’s Day. We salute Coastal Health and Wellness dedicated doctors. Pictured from left are: Opeyemi Ojo, DNP, DNP-C; Yaa Cheremateng, PA-C; Haley McCabe, PA-C; Emily Bailey, MSW, LCSW; Leonard Nagorski, MD; CHW Medical Director Cynthia Ripsin, MS, MPH, MD; Jason Borillo, PA-C; Jacklyn Morgan, PA-C; and Lisa Tigrett, LBSW, E Ed, LPC. Not pictured are Premal Patel, MD, MSC, FACP and Tokunbo Ibidapo-Obe, MD.

National Dentist’s Day

March 6 celebrates National Dentist’s Day. Hats off to Coastal Health and Wellness dentists, pictured from left: Bang Nguyen, DDS; Christiana Foreman, DDS; CHW Dental Director Hanna Lindskog, DDS; Suma Shetty, DDS; and Unsil Keiser, DDS.

Dental Assistant’s Recognition Week, March 1-7

March 1-7 celebrates Dental Assistant’s Recognition Week. We salute the dedicated dental assistants at Coastal Health & Wellness. Pictured from left are Kirsten Saddler, Gabriella Lopez, Beatriz Soliz, Shonta’ Hill, Carolina Rivas, Liliana Salazar, Elizabeth Fuentes and Patricia Molina. Kneeling is Jessica Garza.
WHAT IS CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019

COVID-19 is a new virus that causes respiratory illness in people and can spread from person to person. The outbreak began in December 2019 and Chinese health officials have reported thousands of COVID-19 infections in China, including some that resulted in death.

COVID-19 is most commonly spread from an infected person to others through:
- Respiratory droplets released into the air by coughing and sneezing
- Close personal contact, such as touching or shaking hands
- Touching an object or surface with the virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes before washing your hands
- Rarely, fecal contamination

Patients with COVID-19 have reportedly had mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms including fever, cough, and shortness of breath.

The CDC recommends precautions that are similar to the ones you should take to avoid the flu:
- Wash your hands with soap and water often.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

If you are experiencing fever, cough or difficulty breathing, and have traveled to China or been exposed to a sick traveler from China in the last 14 days, please contact the Galveston County Health District at one of the following phone numbers for guidance: 409-938-2215, 409-938-2208, 409-938-2350 or 409-938-2322.
GCHD, CHW staff wears red to support heart health
HEART DISEASE
refers to several types of heart conditions. The most common type in the United States is coronary artery disease, which affects blood flow to the heart.

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in both men and women.

630,000 Americans
die from heart disease each year. That’s around 1 in every 4 deaths.

Are you at risk for heart
disease?
High blood pressure, high LDL cholesterol and smoking are key heart disease risk factors. Other risks include:

- Diabetes
- Overweight and obesity
- Poor diet
- Physical inactivity
- Excessive alcohol use

You are in control!
Adopt healthy eating habits by limiting foods with salt and sugar.
Get active! Exercising just 20 minutes a day can make a difference!
Stop smoking! Smoking is the leading cause of preventable death in the United States.

WARNING SIGNS OF A
HEART ATTACK
- Chest pain or discomfort
- Upper body pain and discomfort in arms, back, neck, jaw or upper stomach
- Shortness of breath
- Nausea, lightheaded-ness or cold sweats

WARNING SIGNS OF A
STROKE
- Sudden numbness or weakness in the face, arm, or leg, especially on one side of the body
- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or difficulty understanding speech
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or lack of coordination
- Sudden severe headache with no known cause

You are in control!
“Tell me something good...”
Below are comments from Coastal Health & Wellness patients following their visit at our clinics.

“Crystal was amazing. She answered my questions and made me feel good about asking.”
Crystal Huesca, LVN

“They were are all extremely nice and sincere.”
Crystal Huesea, LVN; Mary Jane Griggs, Unit Receptionist - Medical Team Leader; and Jacklyn Morgan, PA-C

“Jamie is very friendly and knowledgeable.”
Dental Hygienist Jamie Trinh, RDH

“The staff was friendly and polite and well informed.”
Yaa Cheremateng, PA-C; Mary Jane Griggs, Unit Receptionist - Medical Team Leader; Guadalupe Resendiz, Medical Aide IV; and Juliana Medrano, Patient Services Specialist II

“She was very understanding and helpful.”
Jacklyn Morgan, PA-C

“She is super sweet, very patient and thorough with the questions I have.”
Dental Director Hanna Lindskog, DDS

“The nurse, the medical assistant and the check-out lady were very gentle, pleasant and understanding.”

“Excellent care I loved what a pleasant experience.”

and aches or cramps that do not go away and losing weight with no known reason. While these symptoms may also be caused by something other than colorectal cancer, it’s important to contact a healthcare provider if symptoms are present.

“There aren’t always symptoms when you have pre-cancerous polyps and colorectal cancer, especially in the early stages,” Ripsin said. “That’s why regular screenings are so important.”

What can you do to reduce your risk of colorectal cancer?

**Diet**

- According to the CDC, medical experts often recommend a diet low in animal fats and high in fruits, vegetables and whole grains to reduce the risk of other chronic diseases such as coronary artery disease and diabetes. This diet may also reduce the risk of colorectal cancer.

- Research is underway to find out if changes to your diet can reduce your colorectal cancer risk.

**Aspirin**

- Researchers are looking at the role of some medicines and supplements in preventing colorectal cancer. The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force found that taking low-dose aspirin can help prevent cardiovascular disease and colorectal cancer in some adults, depending on age and risk factors, according to the CDC.

**Healthy choices**

- Some studies, according to the CDC, suggest that people may reduce their risk of developing colorectal cancer by increasing physical activity, limiting alcohol consumption and avoiding tobacco.

For more information, visit https://www.cdc.gov/cancer colorectal.
March 24 marks Diabetes Alert Day

The Galveston County Health District (GCHD) is happy to offer its weekly support group for people living with diabetes. Topics include monitoring blood glucose, healthy eating, meal planning, understanding food labels, counting carbs and managing stress through increased activity. Diabetes 101 meets every Wednesday 3-4:30 p.m. in the GCHD Texas City WIC training room, 9850-B Emmett F. Lowry Expressway, Suite B-101.02. Registration for the group is required by calling 409-938-2293 or emailing chs@gchd.org. Diabetes is one of the leading causes of disability and death in the United States. Uncontrolled diabetes can cause blindness, nerve damage, kidney disease and other health problems.
CHW joins Mainland Mardi Gras parade
CHW joins Mainland Mardi Gras parade
This year’s IT’S TIME TEXAS Community Challenge comes to an end on March 1. Overall, Galveston County communities have earned more than 1.56 million points in the quest to eat healthy and be more active.

A BIG thank you to City of League City Mayor Pat Hallisey and the city council for supporting the IT’S TIME TEXAS Community Challenge with the mayor’s pledge and city council pledge. Let’s get healthy, Galveston County!

IT’S TIME TEXAS
COMMUNITY CHALLENGE
SCORES | AS OF FEBRUARY 25, 2020

LARGE CITY CATEGORY
13th place in category | League City - 76,650

MID SIZE CATEGORY
2nd place in category | Texas City - 2,010,100
17th place in category | Galveston - 41,750

SMALL CATEGORY
16th place in category | Santa Fe - 59,400
29th place in category | Dickinson - 22,050
33rd place in category | Friendswood - 17,200
81st place in category | La Marque - 3,750

EXTRA SMALL CATEGORY
6th place in category | Clear Lake Shores - 112,950
34th place in category | Kemah - 6,200
70th place in category | Bayou Vista - 1,700
Eating healthier can help reduce many chronic diseases from heart disease to type 2 diabetes, some cancers and obesity. Many of us don’t eat enough fruits and vegetables daily. In fact, it’s estimated only 25 percent of people in the United States consume an adequate amount, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

March marks National Nutrition Month, a great time to refocus on making better educated food choices and sharing that knowledge with our family and friends.

Join us as we celebrate National Nutrition Month:

What: Keep an Eye on Nutrition
When: March 4, 9-11 a.m.

What: Come and learn more about nutrition with WIC including fun booths and activities. The event features Galveston’s Own Farmers Market, HEAL’s KC the Carrot, Galveston County Master Gardeners and more.

Where: 9850-A Emmett F. Lowry Expressway, Community Room A-108, Texas City

This year’s theme focuses on developing good eating and physical activity habits through the Eat Right, Bite by Bite theme. Check out these tips from the Eat Right, by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

Eat a variety of nutritious foods every day
- Include healthful foods from all food groups
- Hydrate healthfully
- Learn how to read nutrition facts panels
- Practice portion control
- Take time to enjoy your food

Plan your meals each week
- Use a grocery list to shop for healthful foods
- Be menu-savvy when dining out
- Choose healthful recipes to make during the week
- Enjoy healthful eating at school and at work
- Plan healthful eating while traveling

Learn skills to create tasty meals
- Keep healthful ingredients on hand
- Practice proper home food safety
- Share meals together as a family when possible
- Reduce food waste
- Try new flavors and foods

When choosing whole grains, lean protein and colorful fruits and vegetables, it’s important to savor the flavor – and be creative in the kitchen.

Fruits and vegetables provide vitamins, minerals and antioxidants in all forms, whether it’s fresh, frozen, canned or dried. They’re also low in calories.

Looking for something sweet to eat? Pick up some fruit. It’s naturally sweet and can help fight cravings so that you don’t find yourself reaching for a candy bar or piece of cake.

When it comes to dairy, choose low-fat or fat-free options for milk, yogurt and cheese.

Go for whole grains when building your plate. Whole grain bread, brown rice and quinoa are great options.

For breakfast, whip up a bowl of oatmeal. Whole grains not only provide vitamins and minerals, but dietary fiber. At least half of the grains you eat should be whole grains.

Finish off your plate with lean protein like round steaks and roasts, skinless poultry, fish, eggs, beans, nuts and seeds.

For free resources on how you can live a healthier life, check out HEAL at gchd.org/HEAL.

You’ll find free recipes, cooking tips, links to resources including free fitness trackers and exercise videos and more.
**Take 3 Actions to Fight Flu**

Influenza (flu) is a contagious disease that can be serious. Every year, millions of people get sick, hundreds of thousands are hospitalized, and thousands to tens of thousands of people die from flu. CDC urges you to take the following actions to protect yourself and others from flu.

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**Get Yourself and Your Family Vaccinated!**

A yearly flu vaccine is the first and most important step in protecting against flu viruses.

Everyone 6 months or older should get an annual flu vaccine. Protect Yourself. Protect Your Family. Get Vaccinated. #FightFlu

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**Stop the Spread**

Take everyday preventive actions to help stop the spread of flu viruses!

Avoid close contact with sick people, avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth, cover your coughs and sneezes, wash your hands often (with soap and water).

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**Ask Your Doctor About Flu Antivirals**

Take antiviral drugs if your doctor prescribes them!

Antiviral drugs can be used to treat flu illness and can make illness milder and shorten the time you are sick.

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[www.cdc.gov/flu](http://www.cdc.gov/flu) #FIGHTFLU

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www.coastalhw.org  Facebook.com/coastalhealthwellness