

Title:

One Simple Test Can Help You Fight The Battle Against Colon Cancer

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460

Summary:

Colorectal cancer (CRC) is the second-leading cause of cancer-related deaths in the United States for both women and men. However, when detected and treated early, colorectal cancer has a five-year survival rate of greater than 90 percent.

Keywords:

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Article Body:

Colorectal cancer (CRC) is the second leading cause of cancer-related deaths in the United States for both women and men. This disease surpasses both breast and prostate cancer in mortality, second only to lung cancer in the number of cancer deaths. Despite the fact that it is highly preventable, it is estimated that 148,610 new cases of colorectal cancer will be diagnosed and 55,170 people will die from the disease in 2006. However, when detected and treated early, colorectal cancer has a five-year survival rate of greater than 90 percent. For that reason, routine screening is vital in the prevention and detection of this deadly disease.

CRC Screening

According to the American Cancer Society, "beginning at age 50, both men and women at average risk for developing colorectal cancer should follow one of these five testing schedules:

• yearly fecal occult blood test (FOBT)* or fecal immunochemical test (FIT)

• flexible sigmoidoscopy every five years

• yearly FOBT* or FIT plus flexible sigmoidoscopy every five years**

• double-contrast barium enema every five years

• colonoscopy every 10 years

* For FOBT, the take-home multiple sample method should be used.

** The combination of yearly FOBT or FIT plus flexible sigmoid-oscopy every five years is preferred over either of these options alone.

All positive tests should be followed up with colonoscopy."

New Test

One simple, easy-to-use test is Quidel's QuickVue® iFOB test. QuickVue iFOB is a fecal immunochemical test (FIT) where the sample is collected by the patient in the privacy of his/her home and mailed to the physician for testing. The test detects the presence of blood in stool specimens, an indication of a number of gastrointestinal disorders, including colorectal cancer.

The QuickVue iFOB test requires only one specimen. Because it is specific to human hemoglobin (blood), there are no dietary restrictions and only certain medication restrictions, distinguishing it from guaiac-based tests that have onerous restrictions. In fact, according to the American Cancer Society, in comparison with guaiac-based tests, commonly known as Fecal Occult Blood Tests (FOBTs), immunochemical tests are more patient-friendly.

"We are committed to saving lives through early screening and detection of colon cancer," said John Tamerius, Ph.D., Vice President, Clinical and Regulatory Affairs, Quidel Corporation. "We believe our unique, patient-friendly sample collection device makes this screening process as easy as possible for the patient."

Despite these recent advancements in CRC screening, less than 50 percent of people age 50 or older have had a recent test. There appears to be a significant opportunity for CRC prevention since it takes an average of 10 years for cancerous cells to develop. Therefore, if you're over the age of 50 or have a family history of colon cancer, you should speak with your physician about taking an iFOB test. The test is simple, takes a minimal amount of time and may help save your life.