

Week 3 (March 16):

March is National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month, the optimal time to talk to your patients about screening. Research shows that a physician's recommendation is the most important factor in increasing the use of preventive and screening services. But the discussion can be complicated. Here are some links to information, resources, and tools to help physicians and other practitioners in communicating with their patients about colorectal cancer screening.

The American Cancer Society's website contains helpful information that clinicians can use to promote screening, including templates of letters that can be used to remind patients about colorectal cancer screening. The American Cancer Society and the National Colorectal Cancer Roundtable will also be releasing, "What You Should Know about Screening for Colorectal Cancer: A Primary Care Clinician's Evidence-Based Toolbox and Guide." This guide provides helpful tools and strategies that offices can implement to facilitate colorectal cancer screening. Links to these resources are provided below:

<http://www.cancer.org/colonmd/>
<http://www.cancer.org/colonmd/patienteducation/index.html>
<http://www.cancer.org/colonmd/riskscreening/index.html>
<http://www.nccrt.org>

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's website provides information about prevention and detection of colorectal cancer and materials that can be used to promote screening from the "Screen for Life" campaign. A link to this website is provided below:

<http://www.cdc.gov/colorectalcancer/>

The National Cancer Institute website provides information on prevention, detection, and treatment for colorectal cancer—here is a link to its website:

<http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/types/colon-and-rectal>

For more information about Medicare's colorectal cancer screening benefit, including coverage, coding, billing, and reimbursement, refer to "The Guide to Medicare Preventive Services for Physicians, Providers, Suppliers, and Other Health Care Professionals" located at http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNProducts/downloads/mps_guide_web-061305.pdf on the CMS Medicare Learning Network (MLN) web page. In addition, CMS has issued Special Edition MLN Matters article SE0613 on colorectal cancer screening—click on the following link <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNMattersArticles/downloads/SE0613.pdf> to review this article.

The CMS website also has a prevention website which contains a section on colorectal cancer screening. Click on www.cms.hhs.gov, select "Medicare", and scroll down to "Prevention" to find the colorectal cancer screening section.

Colorectal cancer is preventable, treatable, and beatable. Encourage your patients to get screened—it could save their life.

Thank you.