



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Lieske Giese, RN, MSPH
Director/Health Officer
715-839-4718
After 5:00 p.m. – 715-514-7881 (cell)
Elizabeth.Giese@co.eau-claire.wi.us

Colorectal Cancer Screening Saves Lives

March is Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

Eau Claire, WI -March 10th, 2014- The Eau Claire City-County Health Department is raising awareness about the importance of colorectal cancer screening during Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month. Among cancers that affect both men and women, colorectal cancer (cancer of the colon or rectum) is the second leading cause of cancer deaths in the United States. Every year, about 140,000 Americans are diagnosed with colorectal cancer, and more than 50,000 people die from it. In 2013, there were 9 deaths from colorectal cancer in Eau Claire County.

Colorectal cancer affects all racial and ethnic groups and is most often found in people ages 50 and older. You may also be at higher risk if you are African American, smoke, or have a family history of colorectal cancer.

“The best way to decrease deaths from colorectal cancer is to get screened regularly starting at age 50. There are often no signs or symptoms of colorectal cancer – that’s why it’s so important to get screened,” says Lieske Giese, Director and Health Officer of the Eau Claire City-County Health Department. In Eau Claire County, only 67% of adults over the age of 50 report ever having a sigmoidoscopy or colonoscopy. The recommendation from the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force is to be screened for colorectal cancer beginning at age 50 and continuing until age 75 using a high-sensitivity fecal occult blood test, sigmoidoscopy or colonoscopy.

Along with recommended preventative screenings, everyone can take these healthy steps to reduce the risk of developing colorectal cancer:

- Increase physical activity
- Limit alcohol consumption
- Avoid tobacco

For more information, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/colorectal/>.

###