



Kathleen Sebelius, Governor
Roderick L. Bremby, Secretary

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
AND ENVIRONMENT

www.kdheks.gov

For more immediate release:
February 1, 2007

Media Contact:
Joe Blubaugh

(785) 296-5795

jblubaugh@kdhe.state.ks.us

Media Note: March is Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month. The following guest opinion piece is submitted by KDHE Secretary Roderick L. Bremby for consideration and publication on your op-ed page this month.

Dear Kansans,

It's the second leading cause of cancer deaths among Kansans, but colorectal cancer is preventable and easily detected. Now is the time to learn more about this type of cancer and what you can do to fight it during *Screen for Life* – a national campaign against this killer.

March is colorectal cancer awareness month nationwide and across Kansas. Colorectal cancer represents 12 percent of all newly diagnosed cancers in our state. During the years 2000 to 2004, colorectal cancer was diagnosed in 7,361 Kansans and 2,744 died from this disease.

Early detection is the key to fighting this cancer but to fight it effectively, know these key points: 1) Get screened if you're older than 50; or younger if you have a family history; 2) colorectal cancer doesn't always present symptoms; 3) both men and women are affected; 4) when found early, treatment can be very effective; and 5) most insurance programs help pay for screenings that can detect this cancer.

Today, there are several testing methods available to find this cancer, like a fecal occult blood test, colonoscopy or sigmoidoscopy. Please consult with your primary care provider on which type of testing best suits your age, health history or current health needs.

If every adult in this country age 50 or older were screened regularly, we could prevent as many as 60 percent of the deaths from colorectal cancer.

The Kansas Department of Health & Environment wants to encourage you to make early screening and detection a tool to use in making responsible health choices. Please call our cancer program, Early Detection Works, for toll-free support, (877) 277-1369, or view resources online at our partner-supported Web site, www.cancerkansas.org.

Together, we can fight and win against colorectal cancer.

Be well,

Secretary Roderick L. Bremby
Kansas Dept. of Health & Environment