



Kathleen Sebelius, Governor  
Roderick L. Bremby, Secretary

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
AND ENVIRONMENT

[www.kdheks.gov](http://www.kdheks.gov)

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**Media Contact:** Joe Blubaugh (785) 296-5795  
[jblubaugh@kdhe.state.ks.us](mailto: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,

Colorectal cancer is not only preventable and easily detected, it is one cancer that can be cured if found early and treated. Unfortunately, colorectal cancer remains the second leading cancer killer of Kansans. Therefore, raising awareness about colorectal cancer will be highlighted this month with the *Screen for Life* campaign.

*Screen for Life* is a comprehensive media campaign featuring television, radio and newspaper ads that help raise awareness about the importance of screening for colorectal cancer. You will be seeing these ads throughout the month of March as a means of raising awareness about the importance of screening for colorectal cancer.

Colorectal cancer represents 12 percent of all newly diagnosed cancers in our state. In 2005, 1,733 Kansans were diagnosed with colorectal cancer and 1,604 Kansans died from the disease. 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.

Colorectal cancer can strike at any age, but nine out of 10 new cases are in people age 50 or older. Since early detection is the key, get screened if you're older than 50, or younger if you have a family history of the disease. When found early, treatment can be very effective and most insurance programs help pay for screenings. Unfortunately, colorectal cancer doesn't always present symptoms and the disease occurs in both men and women.

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.

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 take the time to learn more about colorectal cancer and what you can do to not only be screened for the disease but

to prevent it. Resources online can be accessed at [www.cancerkansas.org](http://www.cancerkansas.org) and [www.cancer.gov](http://www.cancer.gov) or by calling 1-800-4CANCER.

Together, we can fight and win against colorectal cancer.

Be well,

Roderick L. Bremby  
Secretary, Kansas Department of Health and Environment