March Is National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

Colorectal cancer is cancer that occurs in the colon or rectum. Sometimes it is called colon cancer, for short. As the drawing shows, the colon is the large intestine or large bowel. The rectum is the passageway that connects the colon to the anus.

Colorectal cancer affects men and women of all racial and ethnic groups, and is most often found in people aged 50 years or older.

Of cancers that affect both men and women, colorectal cancer is the second leading cancer killer in the United States, but it doesn't have to be. Colorectal cancer screening saves lives. Screening can find precancerous polyps—abnormal growths in the colon or rectum—so that they can be removed before turning into cancer. Screening also helps find colorectal cancer at an early stage, when treatment often leads to a cure. About nine out of every 10 people whose colorectal cancer is found early and treated are still alive five years later.

Talk with your parents! "This Is Personal"

http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/colorectal/sfl/tv_psa.htm

New Research on the Common Cold

Poring through 67 completed studies, researchers at NIH found that prevention help is just a faucet away, with hand washing likely the most effective means for lowering risk.

* Alcohol disinfectants also appear to be helpful.
* Among children specifically, a daily regimen of zinc supplements seemed to lower both cold frequency and the number of school days missed.

* But if the cold train has already left the station, studies indicate that antihistamines, taken together with decongestants and/or pain medications offer the best shot at minor to moderate relief.

* For straight forward pain or fever control, acetaminophen and ibuprofen are effective particularly ibuprofen.

* And while ineffective against congestion, nasal sprays containing the allergy drug ipratropium might just stop a runny nose in its tracks.
(Reuters Health) - Smokers without signs of lung disease may be raising their chances of developing lung problems and other health issues by being couch potatoes, Brazilian researchers say. They compared so-called healthy smokers to non-smokers by physical activity levels and quality of life, and found the smokers to be less fit, less active, more anxious and depressed and more likely to have heart disease.

"The take-home point is smokers are markedly inactive in their daily lives even while they are still considered 'healthy,' or before they develop any disease as a consequence of smoking," study author Dr. Fabio Pitta, of State University of Londrina in Brazil told Reuters Health.

"This indicates that, together with fighting tobacco use, fighting physical inactivity in smokers is also a priority in order to avoid the deleterious combination of smoking and physical inactivity," he said.

Prior research has identified reduced exercise in smokers as a key factor associated with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), a major smoking-related condition. One study showed that increased physical activity among smokers was associated with both a lower risk of COPD and better-preserved lung function. However, no prior study has objectively measured physical activity levels among smokers with no evidence of lung disease compared to non-smokers.

To investigate, Pitta, along with lead researcher Dr. Karina Furlanetto and their colleagues, studied 60 smokers and 50 non-smokers who were matched in age, education level, employment status and other factors that may influence levels of physical activity.

All of the men and women who participated in the study were asked to wear pedometers, which measured the number of steps taken per day, for six consecutive days. They also underwent tests of their lung function and exercise capacity.

The investigators found that smokers walked less than non-smokers, taking only 7,923 steps per day versus 9,553 steps taken by non-smokers. The smokers, 60 percent of whom were women, and 48 percent of whom had attended or completed university, also had poorer lung function and exercise capacity than did non-smokers, the authors report in the journal Respirology.

Smokers reported decreased quality of life, based on their responses to a questionnaire that asked about general and mental health, physical functioning, body pain and vitality.

Smokers also had higher levels of anxiety and depression, as assessed by the questionnaires. The smokers studied ranged in age between 39 and 54 years old, had started smoking at an average age of 16 and smoked about 20 cigarettes per day.

"Other studies have suggested that increasing physical activity can help tobacco users to quit smoking and to reduce considerably the chance of developing tobacco-related diseases, such as Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease," Pitta wrote in an email. "This underlines the importance of aiming to increase physical activity levels in smokers."

Norman Edelman, senior medical consultant to the American Lung Association told Reuters Health, "Yet again, the more you look, the more deleterious effects you see of smoking - it's stopping people from exercising."

Noting the benefits of exercise for heart health, endurance, and weight, Edelman, who was not involved in the study, said "exercise is good for everybody . . . even people with advanced COPD."

For people like the relatively healthy smokers included in the new study, Edelman said, "don't feel comfortable just because you don't have a diagnosis of COPD . . . As soon as you start smoking - with the first cigarette - your lungs start getting abnormal."
Could Infection cause cognitive decline?

Exposure to common infections is linked to memory and brain function — even if the infections never made you ill, according to research presented at the American Stroke Association’s International Stroke Conference 2014.

Researchers found an index of antibody levels caused by exposure to Chlamydia pneumoniae, Helicobacter pylori, cytomegalovirus, and herpes simplex viruses 1 and 2 was associated with worse cognitive performance, including memory, speed of mental processing, abstract thinking, planning and reasoning ability.

“We were very interested in what were the risk factors for cognitive performance and decline,” said Clinton Wright, M.D., M.S., the study’s lead researcher and scientific director of the Evelyn F. McKnight Brain Institute at the University of Miami.

Earlier studies have already linked certain infections to an increased risk of stroke and Alzheimer’s disease. Researchers investigated if evidence of past exposure to these infections contributed to performance on tests of memory, thinking speed and other brain functions.

The study conducted brain function tests and took blood samples from 588 people who participated in the Northern Manhattan Study. Half of the participants then took cognitive tests again in in five years.

Researchers believe exposure to these infections may be associated with an increase in stroke risk, as well as an increase in atherosclerosis and inflammation, said Dr. Wright, who is also chief of the division of cognitive disorders and associate professor of neurology, neuroscience, and epidemiology and public health at the Leonard M. Miller School of Medicine at the University of Miami.

Wright, who conducted the study in collaboration with researchers at Columbia University, isn’t suggesting that people take any action to combat these infections.

Omega-3s may help boost your brain power.

Researchers found that those with higher levels of omega-3 fatty acids appear to have larger brain volumes. The opposite, shrinking brain volume, is a sign of normal aging and sometimes Alzheimer’s disease.

Data were collected from more than 11,000 women who had omega-3 fatty acid levels tested in their blood. Eight years later, MRI scans were done to look at brain volume.

Those with higher levels of omega-3s had larger overall brain volumes.

But more notably, the hippocampus area of the brain was also larger in the higher omega-3 group. That’s important because the hippocampus plays a huge role in memory. In fact, in patients with Alzheimer’s disease, the hippocampus begins to shrink well before symptoms appear.

Omega-3’s can be found in many foods, and can also be supplemented with fish oil capsules.
Like us on Facebook
Call 570-372-4385 to set up a free consultation with SU’s Registered Dietitian, Carnie Datres RD, LDN!

Skin Care on a Budget

Keeping your skin healthy and looking its best doesn’t necessarily mean breaking the bank if you follow these practical tips from leading dermatologists:

Cleanse, treat, and prevent. Don’t let a 12-hour period go by without using some sort of treatment or product on your skin (sunscreen counts).

Use sunscreen 365 days a year. This helps prevent sun damage that could lead to wrinkles, age spots, or even skin cancer.

Get the most from your body moisturizer. In the winter, apply it to damp skin as soon as you get out of the shower to lock in the moisture.

Consider using petroleum jelly. This common, inexpensive product has several uses for skin care including: moisturizing rough, cracked feet, elbows, and hands; dry cuticles and lips; and peeling nails.

Use one or two skin care product lines at a time. Limiting product lines saves money and storage space.

Remember, a more expensive skin care product is not necessarily more effective. Some brands contain fragrances that may lead to skin problems.

Consider dual-function products. Examples include a moisturizer plus sunscreen and a lip balm with sunscreen.

Get the most for your hard-earned money. When choosing anti-aging products, look for ingredients such as vitamin A and alpha hydroxy acid.