

Jackson County Department of Public Health

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STROLLIN COLON VISITS JACKSON COUNTY

In honor of March being Colorectal Cancer Awareness month, the Healthy for Life Action Team of Healthy Carolinians of Jackson County invites you to visit the interactive Strollin' Colon display at the 9th Annual Healthy Living Festival. The Strollin' Colon is a 12 feet long, 10 feet high, and 10 feet wide inflatable colon that visitors walk through to learn about colon health and reducing the risk of colorectal cancer. Professionals from Western Carolina Digestive Consultants will interact with participants, answer questions, and distribute educational literature. The display will be available during the free festival on Saturday, March 24th from 9:00am – 12:00 noon at the Cullowhee Recreation Center.

Colorectal cancer is cancer that occurs in the colon or rectum, and is sometimes called colon cancer, for short. Of cancers that affect both men and women, colorectal cancer is the second leading cancer killer in the United States. Sometimes abnormal growths, called polyps, form in the colon or rectum and may turn into cancer over time. Screening tests can find polyps so 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.

Your risk of getting colorectal cancer increases as you get older. More than 90% of cases occur in people who are 50 years old or older. Other risk factors include having inflammatory bowel disease such as Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis, a personal or family history of colorectal cancer or polyps, or Lynch syndrome. Lifestyle factors that may contribute to an increased risk of colorectal cancer include lack of regular physical activity, a diet low in fruits and vegetables, a low-fiber and high-fat diet, overweight and obesity, alcohol consumption, and tobacco use.

The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommends that adults age 50 to 75 be screened for colorectal cancer. People at an increased risk of developing colorectal cancer should talk to their doctors about when to begin screening, which test is right for them, and how often to get tested.

To learn more about the Strollin' Colon and Healthy Living Festival, please contact Janelle Messer, Health Education Supervisor, at (828) 587-8238 or janellemesser@jacksonnc.org.

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