

NEWS RELEASE

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For immediate release

For more information, contact: **Becky Corman**, 308-262-2217 or 855-227-2217

Colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer-related deaths in the United States, second only to lung cancer. Nebraska ranks among the top in the nation for its high incidence and death rate from colorectal cancer. 910 Nebraskans die every year from this cancer.

However, colorectal cancer screening saves lives – an estimated 60% of colorectal cancer deaths could be prevented if men and women age 50 and older were screened routinely. Panhandle Public Health District and Scotts Bluff County Health Department are working with partners in a regional cancer coalition to make sure more individuals are screened by offering a FREE fecal occult blood testing kit.

“The risk of developing colorectal cancer increases with advancing age,” PPHD Nurse Becky Corman said. “More than 90% of cases occur in people age 50 or older.”

Corman said as soon as you turn 50, you should get screened at regular intervals. “You may need to be tested earlier or more often than other people if you or a close relative have had colorectal polyps or colorectal cancer, or if you have inflammatory bowel disease,” she added. Other risk factors and symptoms are listed **[below]**.

Corman said any Panhandle resident over 50 or those with concerns regarding colorectal cancer risk factors or symptoms can call 855-227-2217 for a free FOBT kit. The kit is simple and can be completed in the privacy of your own home. The user will mail the kit into a laboratory and results will be mailed to the participant and their doctor. “We will assist those with planning follow-up care if needed,” Corman added.

“Getting a screening test for colorectal cancer could save your life. If you are 50 or older or you or a relative have had colorectal polyps or cancer or have inflammatory bowel disease, get screened today,” she concluded.

For a FREE colon cancer screening kit contact Panhandle Public Health District at 1-855-227-2217 or email rcorman@pphd.org. Free Screening Kits are also available at Nein Pharmacy and Sonny’s Pharmacy in Bridgeport, Pamida Pharmacy in Alliance and Western Drug in Sidney.

For additional information about colorectal cancer or free FOBT test kits, visit www.pphd.org. Possible sidebars:

Possible symptoms of colon cancer

- Blood in or on the stool
- A change in bowel habits
- General, unexplained stomach discomfort
- Frequent gas pains or indigestion
- Unexplained weight loss
- Chronic fatigue

(continued)

Risk factors

- Eating a low-fiber, high-fat diet
- Being overweight
- Smoking
- An inactive lifestyle
- Certain hereditary conditions, such as the tendency to have many colon polyps
- A family history of colon cancer, especially parents or siblings