Reaching Young People with the Realities of Colorectal Cancer

This the holiday season, the Colon Cancer Coalition lights up Times Square with an educational message

November 30, 2017 By Cancer Health Staff

Colon cancer is on the rise among younger adults, and the Colon Cancer Coalition wants to raise awareness. Below is an excerpt from a recent post about their Times Square billboard.

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We know the number of colorectal cancer cases being diagnosed in young adults is on the rise. This holiday season the Colon Cancer Coalition is making the education of adults under 50 about the signs and symptoms of this disease a priority. Now through January 15, 2018, the symptoms of colorectal cancer are being highlighted in 1,624 square feet of lights in Times Square, New York City.

While one in 20 Americans will be diagnosed with colorectal cancer in their lifetime, one in 10 of those patients will be diagnosed before they reach the age of 50, the recommended screening age for colorectal cancer. And the number of young onset colorectal cancer cases is growing. The American Cancer Society estimated that approximately 13,500 new cases of colon and rectal cancers would be diagnosed in adults under the age of 50 in 2017.

Accompanied by the true story of a young women diagnosed while in college with colon cancer at the age of 23, the video message at 1500 Broadway boldly proclaims: BLOOD IN YOUR STOOL, Not Normal. UNEXPLAINED WEIGHT LOSS, Not Normal. Don't Ignore Colon Cancer Symptoms. The 10-second message will be showcased a minimum of three times each hour throughout the busy holiday season, including the Thanksgiving festivities, holiday shopping, and the not-to-be-missed New Year's Eve celebration.

"Young people are being diagnosed with colorectal cancer at an alarming rate," says Anne Carlson, executive director of the Colon Cancer Coalition. "By reaching young adults during this busy time of year and encouraging them to take control of their health by learning the signs and symptoms of this cancer, we hope to help young people be diagnosed when the disease is most treatable and save lives."

Colorectal cancer screening should begin for most average risk adults at age 50 and earlier for

African Americans and those with family history. Many screening options are available including colonoscopy and several inexpensive tests that can be done in the privacy of your own home. Colorectal cancer is extremely treatable when diagnosed in the earliest stages. Individuals of all ages experiencing symptoms should talk with their doctors about screening options right for them.

For further information about colorectal cancer, check out Cancer Health's archives.

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