Increasing awareness of primary and secondary prevention of colorectal cancer in at-risk communities of Northeast Mississippi

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Colorectal cancer is the third most common cancer and the third leading cause of cancer death in men and women. Recent trends have shown a decline in colorectal cancer deaths throughout the United States, with the exception of the state of Mississippi.

Mississippi Partnership for Comprehensive Cancer Control (MP3C) Cancer Beat It! Colorectal Cancer Grant

Project theme: “Healthy Body – Healthy Soul”

“A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones.” Proverbs 17:22

Population:
- Five local churches in the Golden Triangle region
- Rural, underserved minorities

Intervention:
- Educational sessions discussing strategies for colon cancer prevention
  - Nutrition
  - Physical Activity
  - Screening
- Faith-based approach using biblical scripture to highlight the importance of leading a healthy life and establish a connection between physical health and spiritual health
- Pretest and posttest questionnaires
- Incentive: Pedometers

Outcomes:
- Positive response from most of the church communities
- Attendees expressed that they knew more about colorectal cancer after the session than they did previously
- Many of the churches sought to establish a rapport with MUW so that they may open their doors to future health related programs

The rate of being diagnosed with colorectal cancer and death rates from colorectal cancer are higher among African Americans than among any other population group in the United States.

Diverse Team of Faculty & Students:
- Public Health Faculty/Health Educators
- Dietitian/Health Educator
- Health Education graduate student/Preacher
- Exercise Science undergraduate student

Colorectal Cancer:

Non-Modifiable Risk Factors:
Age (risk increases with advancing age) • Family history • Race (risk highest in African Americans) • Personal history of colon cancer, intestinal polyps, or chronic inflammatory bowel disease.

Modifiable Risk Factors:
Poor diet (high from animal source and low from vegetables and fruits) • Physical inactivity • Obesity • Smoking • Excessive alcohol consumption • Type II Diabetes.

Colorectal cancer is one of the most preventable cancers because it can develop from polyps that can be removed before they become cancerous.

Primary Prevention
Exercise regularly • Eat a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains • Don’t smoke • Don’t drink alcohol excessively.

Secondary Prevention
Get regular screening tests (beginning at age 50) • If you are at greater risk (e.g. family/personal history), you may need to begin regular screening at an earlier age.

Colon cancer is preventable, treatable, and beatable! 😊

U.S. Preventive Service Task Force’s screening guidelines:
The USPSTF recommends screening for colorectal cancer using fecal occult blood testing, sigmoidoscopy, or colonoscopy in adults, beginning at age 50 years and continuing until age 75 year.