The world has changed.

Taken from colorectalcancersucks.com, ccalliance.org

Submitted by Cheryl Track, Faith Community Nurse

Colorectal cancer risk has not.

At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, *colorectal cancer screenings dropped roughly 90% and diagnoses fell by 32%*. By June, this decline in screening put 18,000 people at risk for delayed or missed diagnoses and will lead to additional deaths from this preventable disease.

Colorectal cancer screening is essential and lifesaving. In the U.S., colorectal cancer is the 3rd most common cancer, yet it is also one of the most preventable. It's highly treatable and often curable when caught early. If you're 45 or older, get screened. If you are at high risk, you may need to start sooner.

In 2023, an estimated 153,020 people will be diagnosed with this highly preventable disease.

SCREENING IS THE BEST PREVENTION TOOL

Screening is the #1 way to prevent colon cancer. Colorectal cancer usually begins as a benign polyp in the lining of the colon or rectum. Polyps are common and removed by your gastroenterologist during a colonoscopy before they progress to invasive cancer, which can occur over time and is more likely as the polyps increase in size.

DON'T IGNORE SYMPTOMS

Regardless of age, talk to your gastroenterologist about any new or worrying symptoms including: blood in stool, changes in bowel habits, weight loss, change in shape/size of stool, anemia, and abdominal or rectal pain.

EVEN IF NOTHING IS WRONG, GET SCREENED

Colorectal cancer doesn't usually cause symptoms until late stages, so proactive screening starting at age 45 is one of the only ways to detect these types of cancers.