

ONEIDA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Adirondack Bank Building, 5th Floor, 185 Genesee St., Utica, NY 13501

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CANCER SERVICES PROGRAM

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ONEIDA COUNTY OFFICE BUILDING GOES BLUE

Utica, NY — In honor of Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month the Oneida County Office Building will be lit blue during the month of March. The Health Department is also sponsoring a dress down day on March 23 in which county employees are encouraged to wear blue jeans and purchase a blue bracelet for \$5 with the proceeds going to the American Cancer Society's work toward finding a cure for colon cancer.

"Colorectal cancer is one of the most preventable types of cancer, that's why screening with a colonoscopy is so important, because if caught early, the disease is highly treatable," said County Executive Anthony J. Picente Jr., who will be featured in Public Service Announcements encouraging colon cancer screenings throughout the month. "I'm proud of our Health Department's efforts in raising awareness and money toward fighting the second leading cause of cancer death in this country."

The Cancer Services Program (CSP) of Oneida, Herkimer, and Madison Counties is urging everyone to talk to their doctor about testing options for colorectal cancer, also referred to as colon cancer. With recommended screening, the number of people who die from colorectal cancer could be reduced by at least 60%.

When colorectal cancer is found and treated early, it can often be cured. In some cases, screening can prevent the development of colorectal cancer by finding polyps (growths that can turn into cancer) so they can be removed before they become cancerous. Yet colorectal cancer remains the second leading cause of cancer death in New York State. Each year, more than 9,000 New Yorkers develop colorectal cancer and more than 3,000 die as a result.

"Colorectal cancer may not cause symptoms, especially at first, which is why regular screening is needed to catch the disease in its earliest stages," says Michelle Ward, CSP Program Manager. "We want people to know there is more than one screening test for colorectal cancer and screening is easier than ever. The important thing to remember is to talk to your doctor, decide which screening test is right for you, and get screened. For anyone without a doctor or without insurance, the Cancer Services Program (CSP) of Oneida, Herkimer, and Madison Counties can help."

All men and women age 50 and older should get screened for colorectal cancer. Anyone with a personal or family history of colon polyps, colorectal cancer, or a personal history

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of inflammatory bowel disease, is at higher risk for developing colorectal cancer. These individuals should talk to their doctors about when to begin screening and how often they should be tested. In addition, men and women of any age with blood in their stool, weight loss without knowing why, or a change in their bowel habits including aches and pains that do not go away should talk to their doctor.

The CSP of Oneida, Herkimer, and Madison Counties offers colorectal, breast and cervical cancer screening to eligible uninsured and underinsured individuals in the tri-county area.

For individuals insured through Medicaid, Medicare, and commercial health plans, including those participating in the New York State of Health, colorectal cancer screening is covered with no cost to the patient.

For questions call the Cancer Services Program of Oneida, Herkimer, and Madison County at 315-798-5248, or visit the following link for information on screening:
<http://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/cancer/colorectal/screening.htm>

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