

## Seacoast Gastroenterology Stresses Importance

Seacoast Gastroenterology Stresses Importance of Colonoscopies During

National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

Exeter, NH—March 2007—It's estimated that more than 148,000 men and women will be diagnosed with colorectal cancer in 2007. Of those, more than 55,000 will die from the disease, which is preventable, treatable, and beatable if diagnosed in its earliest, most curable stages. March is National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month and organizations nationwide, including Seacoast Gastroenterology of Exeter, New Hampshire, are determined to change these alarming statistics.

"Education about the importance of colonoscopies as a preventative tool—not just a diagnostic procedure—is fundamental to lowering colorectal cancer rates," said Dr. Alain Ades of Seacoast Gastroenterology. "The good news is that there has been significant progress over recent years in the accuracy of diagnosis and, with early detection, in the successful treatment for these cancers."

Dr. Ades is one of four highly experienced and board certified physicians at Seacoast Gastroenterology that provide state-of-the-art screening, diagnosis, and treatment services for patients throughout New Hampshire, southern Maine, and northeastern Massachusetts.

Those who are at risk for colorectal cancer include:

- Men and women who are 50 and older
- People with a personal or family history of colorectal cancer or benign (not cancerous) colorectal polyps
- People with a family history of inherited colorectal cancer
- People who use tobacco
- People who are obese and/or sedentary

Seacoast Gastroenterology physician Dr. Francis Colizzo says that men and women at average risk should begin regular screening at age 50. For people at greater risk, beginning regular colorectal cancer screenings at an earlier age is recommended.

If there is a personal or family history of colorectal cancer, benign colorectal polyps, inflammatory bowel disease, or breast, ovarian or endometrial cancer, talk with a health care professional about earlier and more frequent screening. And if you are African American, Seacoast Gastroenterology experts suggest you should begin screening at age 45.

According to the practice's Dr. Marylyn Grondin, "Colon cancer doesn't discriminate between gender or race. In the United States, one out of every eighteen women will develop colorectal cancer. It's the third most common cancer in American women after lung and breast cancers. But when diagnosed early, 90 percent of colorectal

cancers are completely curable.&rdquo;

In fact, the American Cancer Society recently announced a dramatic decrease in the overall mortality rate for colon cancer. &ldquo;These new statistics are astounding. All of our expectations about prevention and treatment are coming to fruition,&rdquo; added Seacoast Gastroenterology physician Dr. John Dowd. &ldquo;Colonoscopies remain the best, most effective method available of detecting colorectal cancer.&rdquo;

To learn more about colorectal cancer and the importance of screening for the disease, contact Seacoast Gastroenterology at 603-772-0222 or visit the American Society of Gastroenterology and Endoscopy at <http://www.asge.org/>.

About National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

The Cancer Research and Prevention Foundation together with its founding partners the American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy, Foundation for Digestive Health and Nutrition, and the National Colorectal Cancer Roundtable, joined forces to designate March as National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month in 2000. The goals of this initiative are to generate widespread awareness about colorectal cancer and to encourage people to learn more about prevention of the disease through regular screening and a healthy lifestyle.