



NEWS RELEASE

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9/15/22 - Strollin' through the Colon Event to be Held in Hardin County

Colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer-related deaths in men and third in women in the United States. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that people at average risk of colorectal cancer start regular screening at age 45.

On October 1, Southern 7 Health Department (S7HD) and its partners, Hope Light Foundation and University of Chicago Medicine Center for Asian Health Equity, along with City of Rosiclare, Illinois, will host the community event "Strollin' through the Colon", featuring Colorectal Cancer (CRC) Screening Fecal Immunochemical Test (FIT) kits, cancer education and giveaways.

"The Southern 7 Health Department is delighted to work with the University of Chicago and Hope Light Foundation again this year to raise awareness of CRC, a very deadly disease," said Rhonda Andrews Ray, S7HD Executive Director/Public Health Administrator.

Designed not only to educate and save lives, this event will present the reason to get regular colorectal screenings in a light-hearted way that allows those who attend to walk through a 20-foot, inflatable colon. Afterwards, visitors can talk with medical professionals on the importance of early detection of colon cancer and treatment. Free at-home test kits will be available for those 45 and over.

One way to screen is a FIT (a stool-based test). "If we find colon cancer early, nine out of 10 people will have a long-term survival and can be cured from the disease," said Dr. Karen Kim, MD, MS, Director of the Center and principal investor for Illinois Colon CARES. "Unfortunately, about 40 percent of people diagnosed with colon cancer are found in late stages when the survival rate is very low. This is a disease that needs special attention because we can prevent it with screening," said Rudy Bess, Founding Director of the Hope Light Foundation.

The University of Chicago Center for Asian Health Equity's U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \$3.8 million grant, Illinois Colon CARES now targets the rural communities of Illinois hardest hit by high Colorectal Cancer incidence and death rates. "The Center for Asian Health Equity launched the *Engaging Rural Partners for Better Health Outcomes* initiative as a way to provide support to rural county health departments that are tackling the majority of these issues," said Fornessa T. Randal, Co-Director for the Center.

"Strollin' through the Colon" will be held from 8:00 to 11:00 a.m. at the City Park on the River in Rosiclare. For more information, call Southern 7 Health Department at 618-634-2297 ex. 9161 or visit them on Facebook.

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