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New Study Confirms Diabetics Face Significantly Higher Risk of Colorectal Cancer

HONOLULU, October 31, 2005 -- A new study confirms that patients with diabetes are significantly more likely to have colon cancer than individuals without diabetes. Researchers at the Medical University of South Carolina reported results from a large cross-sectional analysis assessing the risk of colon cancer among patients with diabetes at the 70th Annual Scientific Meeting of the American College of Gastroenterology.

Researchers analyzed data from a comprehensive nationally representative sample of patients using the 1997-2003 National Health Interview Survey. Of the 226,953 patients in the study, 5.9 percent had a history of diabetes. Researchers controlled for age, race, gender, obesity, alcohol use, tobacco use, and physical activity. Adjusting for potentially confounding factors, researchers found that people with diabetes were 1.4 times more likely to have colon cancer as individuals without diabetes.

“This work is important because it suggests that people with diabetes may be at higher risk of colon cancer. Until we know for sure, diabetics should pay particular attention to their doctor's recommendations for colorectal screening,” said Donald Garrow, M.D. one of the investigators.

About the American College of Gastroenterology

The ACG was formed in 1932 to advance the scientific study and medical treatment of disorders of the gastrointestinal (GI) tract. The College promotes the highest standards in medical education and is guided by its commitment to meeting the needs of clinical gastroenterology practitioners. Consumers can get more information on GI diseases through the following ACG-sponsored programs:

- 1-800-978-7666 (free brochures on common GI disorders, including ulcer, colon cancer, gallstones, and liver disease)
- 1-866-IBS-RELIEF and www.ibsrelief.org (free educational materials)
- 1-800-HRT-BURN (free brochure and video on heartburn and GERD)
- www.acg.gi.org (ACG's Web site)

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