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## **Obesity Increases the Risk for Colorectal Cancer and Polyps American College of Gastroenterology & Campaign to End Obesity Team Up to Urge Screening**

**Bethesda, MD, March 15, 2012** – The American College of Gastroenterology (ACG) and the Campaign to End Obesity are joining forces to highlight the potentially deadly link between higher Body Mass Index (BMI) and colorectal cancer. In light of the increasing prevalence of obesity in the United States and the strength of the scientific evidence linking obesity to increased colorectal cancer risk, the two organizations are combining efforts during March Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month. Their goal is to educate the public about obesity as a major risk factor for the second leading cancer killer in the United States and about the importance of colorectal cancer screening in patients with high Body Mass Index.

“Dietary and other modifiable risk factors may account for as many as 90 percent of colorectal cancers, and recent studies suggest that about one-quarter of colorectal cancer cases could be avoided by following a healthy lifestyle,” explained ACG President Lawrence R. Schiller, MD, FACG. “Consumers need to understand the link between a higher Body Mass Index and colorectal cancer, take this risk factor seriously, and talk to their doctor about colorectal cancer tests,” he added.

“Obesity is the precursor to an array of serious diseases, among them colorectal cancer. With two thirds of adults struggling with being overweight or obese, it is essential people understand their long-term health. Fortunately, we have available many useful and practical tools to help people. Screening is one of the most powerful weapons at-hand for preventing colorectal cancer and obesity. Education around these issues is of utmost importance,” said Stephanie Silverman, co-founder of the Campaign to End Obesity.

The association between metabolic syndrome and colorectal cancer mortality, and type 2 diabetes mellitus and colorectal cancer risk, suggests that obesity-induced insulin resistance and hyperinsulinemia may have a role in the development of colorectal cancer. Based on this and other epidemiologic evidence, the American College of Gastroenterology and the Campaign to End Obesity are committed to providing communities, families, educators and policymakers with the latest information, educational tools and resources to empower them to make informed and timely decisions when it comes to healthy body weight and colorectal cancer prevention strategies.

### **Screening Recommendations from the American College of Gastroenterology**

The ACG recommends that men and women at average risk for colorectal cancer begin screening at age 50. African-Americans should begin colorectal cancer screening at 45. The 2009 ACG evidence-based colorectal cancer screening guidelines distinguish between cancer prevention tests and cancer detection tests. Cancer prevention tests are preferred over detection tests. Colonoscopy every 10 years is the preferred colorectal cancer prevention test.

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## **ACG Educational Links for Consumers**

[Colorectal Cancer Health Information](#)

[Obesity & Digestive Health Information](#)

## **Campaign to End Obesity Links**

[Obesity Facts and Resources](#)

[Get Involved](#)

## **About the American College of Gastroenterology**

Founded in 1932, the American College of Gastroenterology is an organization with an international membership of more than 12,000 individuals from 80 countries. The College is committed to serving the clinically oriented digestive disease specialist through its emphasis on scholarly practice, teaching and research. The mission of the College is to serve the evolving needs of physicians in the delivery of high quality, scientifically sound, humanistic, ethical, and cost-effective health care to gastroenterology patients. <http://www.gi.org/> Follow [ACG on Twitter](#)

## **About the Campaign to End Obesity**

The effects of the nation's obesity epidemic are immense: taxpayers, businesses, communities and individuals spend hundreds of billions of dollars each year due to obesity, including an estimated \$168 billion in medical costs. By bringing together leaders from across industry, academia and public health with policymakers and their advisors, the Campaign to End Obesity provides the information and guidance that decision-makers need to make the changes necessary to reverse one of the nation's costliest and most prevalent diseases. <http://obesitycampaign.org>

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