



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Oklahoma HMO aims to increase awareness during National Colon Cancer Awareness Month

Colorectal cancer is the third-most prevalent form of cancer in the United States

OKLAHOMA – The National Cancer Institute estimated 143,630 cases of colon cancer were diagnosed last year in the United States and 1,610 in Oklahoma. March is National Colon Cancer Awareness Month and GlobalHealth, an Oklahoma-based health maintenance organization (HMO), aims to increase awareness of colon cancer by reminding Oklahomans of the important role colorectal cancer screenings can play in early detection and prevention.

“Colonoscopies and the Fecal Occult Blood Test (FOBT) are preventive screenings that can detect polyps or cancer, which could have otherwise gone unnoticed,” said Dr. Wesley Williams, medical director at GlobalHealth. “The standard colonoscopy is a very useful test for colorectal cancer screenings, and it’s one we really encourage.”

GlobalHealth shares a bit more about colonoscopies for colon cancer screenings and encourages Oklahomans to schedule their colonoscopy today:

What is a colonoscopy? A colonoscopy is a procedure where a medical provider uses a long tube with a light and camera to detect polyps. Depending on your physician’s recommendations, this procedure is done every 10 years. If a polyp is found during the procedure, there is the possibility of instant removal. Studies suggest that colonoscopies reduce deaths from colorectal cancer by 60 – 70 percent.

When should I begin screening for colon cancer? According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, you should begin screening for colorectal cancer at regular intervals soon after turning 50. However, it’s important to begin colorectal cancer screening earlier if you meet one of the following criteria:

- You or a close relative have had colorectal polyps or colorectal cancer;
- You have an inflammatory bowel disease such as Crohn’s disease or ulcerative colitis;
- You have a genetic syndrome such as familial adenomatous polyposis (FAP) or hereditary non-polyposis colorectal cancer (Lynch syndrome).

Are there any alternatives to a colonoscopy? If your physician determines a colonoscopy is not the best fit for you, they may recommend a high sensitivity Fecal Occult Blood Test (FOBT). This treatment tests for hidden blood in stool, which can be an early sign of cancer. The test requires a brush or card to touch a bowel movement. This test can be performed annually and can be done at home with no preparations. Studies have shown that this test can help reduce deaths from colorectal cancer by 15 – 33 percent.

GlobalHealth wants to provide you with the information you need to speak with your primary care physician about this very important topic. Scheduling a colonoscopy is an effective way to help decrease your risk of the third-leading cause of cancer for men and women in the United States.

About GlobalHealth

GlobalHealth is changing health insurance in Oklahoma. As an industry leader, GlobalHealth is an Oklahoma-based health maintenance organization covering more than 44,000 individuals in all 77 Oklahoma counties. Working proactively with each member, GlobalHealth engages a personalized management plan to address their specific needs and ensure the best possible health outcomes. GlobalHealth utilizes cutting edge, predictive data technology as a foundation to deliver improved healthcare as part of its commitment to making health insurance more affordable. Its membership includes state and education employees, federal employees, municipal employees and Medicare Advantage members. GlobalHealth employs more than 250 associates throughout Oklahoma. To learn more, visit www.GlobalHealth.com.

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