



*The Maryland State Medical Society*

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## **MEDCHI ENCOURAGES COLORECTAL SCREENING DURING NATIONAL COLORECTAL CANCER AWARENESS MONTH**

BALTIMORE, March 12, 2026 — In observance of National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month, MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society is urging Maryland residents to make colorectal cancer screening a priority and to consult with their physicians about the screening options most appropriate for them.

Although colorectal cancer is largely preventable, it remains one of the leading causes of cancer-related deaths in the United States. Early detection through routine screening significantly improves outcomes.

“Colorectal Cancer Screening saves lives,” said **Eric Wargotz, M.D., FCAP**, President of MedChi. “Colorectal cancer often develops without symptoms in its early stages. That is why routine screening is critical. In addition to colonoscopy and stool blood detection, we are fortunate to now have available a blood test to screen for colorectal cancer. *Shield* by Guardant is the first and only blood test approved by the FDA as a primary screening option for colorectal cancer for adults 45 and over at average risk. Detecting colorectal cancer earlier saves lives.”

It is recommended that adults at average risk begin colorectal cancer screening at age 45. Individuals with a family history of colorectal cancer, inflammatory bowel disease, or other risk factors may need to begin screening earlier.

“Physicians across Maryland are committed to ensuring patients have access to evidence-based screening options,” said **Gene Ransom**, CEO of MedChi. “We also recognize that disparities in access, awareness, and follow-up care continue to affect outcomes. MedChi supports policies and community-based initiatives that reduce barriers and promote equitable access to preventive services.”

Colorectal cancer disproportionately impacts underserved communities, and screening rates remain lower in some populations due to limited access, cost concerns, and lack of awareness. MedChi encourages Marylanders to talk with their healthcare provider about which screening method is right for them and to stay up to date on recommended preventive care.

Symptoms such as persistent changes in bowel habits, rectal bleeding, unexplained weight loss, or abdominal discomfort should be evaluated promptly by a healthcare professional.

This March, MedChi joins physicians, healthcare organizations, and advocates nationwide in reinforcing a simple but powerful message: **Get screened. Early detection can save your life.**

About MedChi

MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society, is a non-profit membership association of Maryland physicians. It is the largest physician organization in Maryland. The mission of MedChi is to serve as Maryland's foremost advocate and resource for physicians, their patients and the public health of Maryland. For more information, please visit [www.medchi.org](http://www.medchi.org).