



*The Maryland State Medical Society*

**News: For Immediate Release**  
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## **March is Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month**

BALTIMORE, March 06, 2024 – March is colorectal cancer awareness month. Colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in the United States, behind lung cancer. [The National Cancer Institute](#) estimates that 153,020 people in the United States received a diagnosis colon or rectal cancer in 2023 and approximately 52,550 died of it.

Colorectal cancer awareness is important because many cases of cancer of the colon or rectum are preventable. Screening by colonoscopy can prevent this cancer because precancerous polyps found during the procedure can be removed at the same time. Furthermore, colonoscopy can also detect the cancer at early stages, when treatment is more likely to be successful.

Cancer of the colon or rectum is more common in men than women. It is also more common among African Americans than people of other races. The median age of diagnosis in the United States is 66 years, while about 78 percent of newly diagnosed patients are aged 55 and older.

The [American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy \(ASGE\)](#) is committed to raising awareness of colorectal cancer in our state. As such, the ASGE has been recognized by both the House and the Senate for its commitment to early detection and prevention. Maryland Senator Clarence K. Lam, MD, sponsored a [citation](#) and a [resolution](#), followed by a [citation](#) sponsored by Delegate Terri L. Hill, MD.

ASGE President Jennifer Christie, MD, FASGE thanked Maryland lawmakers for their support, adding that “encouraging their constituents to get screened for colorectal cancer on a regular basis when appropriate is going to save many lives. When it’s detected early enough, colorectal cancer has a 90 percent survival rate.”

Speaking on behalf of MedChi, President Ben Lowentritt said: “We fully support ASGE in the push for more funding, more research, and more screening. Staying ahead of colorectal cancer is the best form of prevention.”

The American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy (ASGE) was founded in 1941 and is dedicated to advancing patient care and digestive health by promoting excellence in gastrointestinal endoscopy. Gastroenterologists care for patients with some of the most common, costly, and consequential diseases facing the American public today. MedChi encourages all Marylanders to get screened for colorectal cancer.

## 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).