

## **(Neb.)-Residents Over 50 Encouraged To Get Colon Cancer Screening**

By: Roxie Graham-Marski Posted at: 03/10/2014 01:32 PM

(PANHANDLE)-March is Colon Cancer Awareness Month, and the Panhandle Public Health District (PPHD) is working with partners at the Panhandle Cancer Coalition and the Nebraska Colon Cancer Screening program to raise awareness about screening for colon cancer. One way they are doing so is by giving out FREE fecal occult blood test (FOBT) kits to Panhandle residents aged 50 and older.

Colorectal cancer is the fourth most common cancer in the United States and is the fourth leading cause of cancer death. Colon cancer claims the lives of about 52,000 men and women each year. The good news, however, is that colon cancer is preventable, treatable, and beatable.

Becky Corman, a registered nurse with PPHD and coordinator of the Panhandle Cancer Coalition, recommends that both men and women, beginning at age 50, get screened at routine intervals. Some individuals may need to be tested earlier or more often if they or a close family member has had colorectal polyps or colorectal cancer, or if they have inflammatory bowel disease.

“Colon cancer occurs more often in Nebraska than in the rest of the United States,” said Dr. Joseph Acierno, chief medical officer and director of Public Health for the state Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). “More Nebraskans are receiving colon cancer screenings than ever before, which is encouraging, but the state’s colon cancer incidence rate is 44.3 per 100,000, which is higher than the national rate of 39.7. There’s still more progress to be made and more lives to be saved.”

Corman says, “We want to make a difference in the lives of our community members, their families and friends.” When colorectal cancer is found early and treated, the chance for a full recovery is very high. Getting screened for colorectal cancer can save lives. For a FREE colon cancer screening kit, contact PPHD at 855-227-2217.

Additional information about the DHHS Nebraska Colon Cancer Screening Program is available by calling 800-532-2227 or visiting [www.dhhs.ne.gov/crc](http://www.dhhs.ne.gov/crc).

For more information, visit [www.pphd.org](http://www.pphd.org). PPHD is working together to improve the health, safety and quality of life for all who live, learn, work and play in the Panhandle. Their vision is to create a healthier and safer Panhandle community.

--Panhandle Public Health District