



**NORTH DAKOTA**  
DEPARTMENT *of* HEALTH

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## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:  
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### **Governor Hoeven Proclaims March *Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month* in North Dakota**

BISMARCK, N.D. – Governor John Hoeven has proclaimed March as *Colorectal Awareness Month* in North Dakota.

*Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month* is observed nationally to promote the importance of prevention and screening of colorectal cancer.

“Colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer deaths among North Dakota,” said Joyce Sayler, Comprehensive Cancer Prevention and Control director for the North Dakota Department of Health. “Early detection is key to preventing those deaths. That’s why we encourage people 50 and older to get regular screenings for colorectal cancer.”

The Department of Health offers these important points about colorectal cancer:

- If you’re 50 or older, see your doctor to get screened. For those with a family history of the disease, screening should begin earlier.
- Colorectal cancer and precancerous polyps don’t always cause symptoms.
- Colorectal cancer affects both women and men and all races and ethnicities.
- When found early, colorectal cancer treatment can be very effective and save lives.
- Many insurance plans help pay for screenings that can detect colorectal cancer.

“About 400 North Dakotans will be diagnosed with colorectal cancer this year, and nearly 120 North Dakotans will die from the disease,” said Dr. Doug Berglund, surgeon at Medcenter One Health Systems, Bismarck, and chair of the North Dakota Cancer Coalition. “If every North Dakotan 50 or older were screened regularly, we could prevent as many as 60 percent of deaths from colorectal cancer.”

For more information about Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month, contact Dubi Schwanz, North Dakota Department of Health, at 701.328.2306.

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Proclamation  
**COLORECTAL CANCER AWARENESS MONTH**  
March 2009

**WHEREAS**, colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer deaths in men and women in North Dakota, as well as in the United States; and

**WHEREAS**, about 400 North Dakotans will be diagnosed with colorectal cancer this year, and about 120 North Dakotans will die from the disease; and

**WHEREAS**, only 44 percent of North Dakotans older than 50 get annual screenings for colorectal cancer; and

**WHEREAS**, there often are no symptoms of colorectal cancer, but regular screenings can reduce the number of deaths from the disease by detecting cancerous or pre-cancerous conditions early, when treatment is most effective; and

**WHEREAS**, education can help inform the public about methods of early detection and prevention; and

**WHEREAS**, it is important to continue the fight against cancer and to reduce the risk of this disease among our citizens.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, as the Governor of the State of North Dakota, I do hereby proclaim March 2009, **COLORECTAL CANCER AWARENESS MONTH** in the state of North Dakota.

John Hoeven  
Governor

-- 30 --

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