



BRINGING HOPE HOME

AUGUST 2006

FROM THE DR'S DESK:

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- New clinical trials available!
- Visit our Newly designed website to sign up to receive periodic newsletters
- Free Prostate exam
- Free Clinical Breast Exam

COLON & RECTAL CANCER

Clinical Discussion: By Avi Retter, MD

Beginning at age 50, both men and women at average risk for developing colorectal cancer should follow one of these five testing schedules:

- ◆ Yearly Fecal Occult Blood Test (FOBT)* or Fecal Immunochemical Test (FIT)
- ◆ Flexible sigmoidoscopy every 5 years
- ◆ Yearly FOBT* or FIT **plus** flexible sigmoidoscopy every 5 years**
- ◆ Double-contrast barium enema every 5 years
- ◆ Colonoscopy every 10 years

**For FOBT, the take-home multiple sample method should be used.*

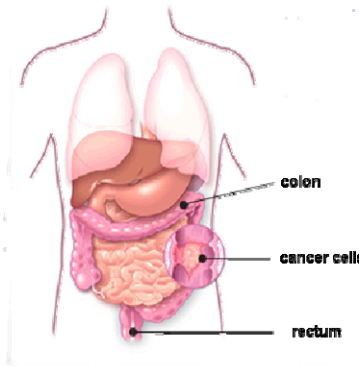
***The combination of yearly FOBT or FIT plus flexible sigmoidoscopy every 5 years is preferred over either of these options alone.*

All positive tests should be followed up with colonoscopy.

People should begin colorectal cancer

screening earlier and/or undergo screening more often if they have any of the following colorectal cancer risk factors.

- ◆ A personal history of colorectal cancer or adenomatous polyps;
- ◆ A strong family history of colorectal cancer or polyps (cancer or polyps in a first-degree relative younger than 60 or in two first-degree relatives of any age);
- ◆ Note: a first degree relative is defined as a parent, sibling, or child.
- ◆ A personal history of chronic inflammatory bowel disease;
- ◆ A family history of an hereditary colorectal cancer syndrome (familial adenomatous polyposis or hereditary non-polyposis colon cancer)



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MANAGING SIDE EFFECTS

SKIN CARE DURING RADIATION TREATMENTS

A common side effect of radiation treatment is skin reaction. Skin reactions vary depending on the part of your body being treated and the amount of radiation you are receiving. Most skin reactions are minor and develop around the third

week of treatment and can last for a period of three weeks. Some common complaints include:

- Red, itchy skin
- Skin that is dry and flaky
- Tanned or bronzed complexion

- Sore skin that is sensitive to the touch
- Skin that is wet, especially in skin folds

While these symptoms are concerning, it is very important to avoid using any

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COLON & RECTAL CANCER

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DISCUSSION

As mentioned above, although there are multiple screening options (as no single test is of unequivocal superiority), most recommend that patients with an average risk for colorectal cancer should be offered yearly FOBT (two samples from each of three consecutive stools with any positive test followed by colonoscopy), and flexible sigmoidoscopy every 5 years. Patients with higher than average risk for colorectal cancer should be offered screening as appropriate for their specific condition.

For further information or inquiries please contact Dr. Retter at ECCC or email him at retter@eastchestercenter.com.

SKIN CARE

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creams, lotions or deodorants which may contain alcohol on the area being treated. These products may dry the treatment area and worsen your symptoms.

Some tips for managing skin care during your radiation treatment include:

- Wear loose, soft, lightweight clothing over the treatment area. Women may need to avoid bras if being treated in that area.

- Avoid exposure to very hot or very cold temperatures to the treatment area.
- Do not rub or massage the affected area. Pat dry and avoid rubbing the tattoo.
- Avoid direct sun exposure. Use a sunscreen with at least 30 SPF.
- Do not use adhesive tapes such as bandaids on the area.

There are specific soaps and lotions that are ok to use during your treatments. Dove soap is recommended for washing. A lotion which is ok to use is Cetaphil. Toms of Maine is the recommended antiperspirant.

Skin reactions are a common side effect of radiation. This reaction does not indicate a spread of illness. You



should alert a member of your health care team of any changes in your skin.

NURSING CORNER

MANAGING NEUTROPENIA

White blood cells (WBC) are one of our greatest defenses against infection. During your treatment, your white blood cell count may be low. The term for a low white blood cell count is 'neutropenia'. For some treatments, neutropenia is an expected side effect. Your medical team will provide medications to treat the neutropenia. There are measures that you can take to minimize your risk for infection while your WBC counts recover. Some of these measures include:

- Ask family and friends who have colds or flu not to visit you until you are

better.

- Practice good hygiene, especially frequent hand washing
- Do not get dental work unless it is approved by your medical team at Eastchester Center.
- Avoid handling fresh flowers and plants
- Do not clean any pet droppings or pet living areas
- Avoid crowded areas such as theaters, subways, etc.
- Be extra careful to wash

your hands and utensils when there are small children in the house with colds or flu.

- See the "Ask Paula" section for nutritional measures

It is important that you monitor your temperature and call the doctor immediately if your temperature is 100.5 or greater. Other signs of infection to alert the doctor of immediately include:

- Productive cough, difficulty breathing
- Redness and swelling in any area of your skin

- Mouth sores or white tongue
- Burning and/or difficulty with urination
- Uncontrollable shaking with chills (check your temperature if this happens)

Neutropenia is a serious side effect that can be managed within a few days. As a partner in your health care, we encourage you to keep open communication with your health care team about any concerns you may have. We are available to you 24 hours a day!!



TOWN HALL

HELPING A FAMILY MEMBER GET THROUGH TREATMENT



Asking your family members for help during this time benefits you *and* them. Members of your family want to give you their support, but aren't always sure how. Assign specific tasks to each individual. If one person in your family is particularly organized, ask him or her to help you handle insurance and legal issues. Have a family member collect and write down any questions that you and your family have for your doctor. Take this person with you when you visit your

doctor. Your family member can make sure all of the questions are asked and record the answers. You might ask several people to provide different kinds of emotional support so you'll always have someone to call on. Give your children age-appropriate tasks and responsibilities so they feel they're offering some help, too.

If a friend or family mem-

ber says, "Tell me how I can help," have an answer ready. Don't hesitate to ask for help with everyday tasks like cooking, cleaning, yard work and driving kids to their activities.

Your cancer treatment may keep you at home or in the hospital for an extended period of time. Not being able to do your normal activities – such as going to work or participating in a favorite hobby – may make

you feel useless or "stir crazy." Ask friends and family members to set up a schedule of visitors who can help you pass the time.

Remember, by accepting others' help, you'll have more time to focus on getting better.

EXERCISE FOR HEALTH

Exercise is important for everyone because it keeps us healthy and reduced stress. Exercise keeps the blood flowing to nourish the body systems and its internal organs. Yoga and Chi-Gong, an ancient healing art from China are some of the exercises that are offered at our center through the Cancer Support Network.

Yoga-The practice of Yoga involves different breathing techniques, gentle stretches and meditations that bring the body to a more relaxed state. This is important to help focus on calming thoughts.

Chi-Gong uses positive energy to enhance the circulatory and immune systems and to calm the nervous system. Since treatment require us to sit for long periods of time, it is important to do circulation exercises to keep blood flowing to the extremities. The result is a calmer and more relaxed body.

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NUTRITION CORNER

ASK PAULA?

Question: Paula, the doctor says that my white blood cell count is low and I should avoid certain foods. Is there a special diet that I should follow?

Answer: Patients who are undergoing chemotherapy may experience a drop in their white blood cell count. This drop in WBC is called neutropenia. A special diet called the neutropenic diet should be observed in order to minimize your exposure to bacteria in food items. Foods that should be avoided include:

- Fresh fruits and vegetables

(can be eaten cooked), dried fruits, seeds and nuts. Fruits with thick skin (bananas and oranges, etc) are ok as long as there are no obvious bruises on the skin.

- Raw or rare cooked meats, eggs and fish
- Unpasteurized dairy products
- Fresh herbs and seasonings unless they are added while cooking
- No deli cut or processed meats
- No honey unless it is added

while cooking

- No foods from street vendors, coffee carts and salad bars!!!

Individually packaged foods are very helpful at this time. Do not store food at room temperature because bacteria grow rapidly when foods are not refrigerated. Once your white blood cell count returns to normal, you can start eating your favorite foods again and enjoy every bite!!!



Please visit us on our website!

www.eastchestercenter.com

EASTCHESTER CENTER FOR CANCER CARE

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The Eastchester Center for Cancer Care is a state-of-the-art cancer treatment center providing unparalleled cancer care for the Bronx, Queens, Westchester and greater New York. We are conveniently located off all major highways and have free parking to make your visit as convenient as possible. Please contact us to learn more about the services we provide.



Eastchester

CENTER FOR CANCER CARE

BRINGING HOPE HOME



EXERCISE FOR HEALTH

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A quick way to calm the body and mind is to do slow deep breathing. It is simple to do:

Sit up straight in a comfortable and relaxed position;

Let your hands rest in your lap;

Slowly breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth or nose

Repeat several times and see how much more relaxed you feel.

I look forward to meeting you in person. Please look for me on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings.

Marjorie Nissen, CSW

COMMUNITY BULLETIN

- Free Clinical Breast Exams August 22, 2006
 - Free Prostate Screening August 29, 2006
- PLEASE CALL FOR AN APPOINTMENT
- ◆ **Evening of Fun at ECCC** August 30 2006
- Bring the whole family 4:00pm-8:30pm

Food/Games/Music/Entertainment

MENTAL HEALTH

*"Whenever you see
darkness, there is
extraordinary op-
portunity for the
light to burn
brighter."*

---Bono

