

**Not Only in March's Bowel Cancer Awareness Month: The German Cancer Research Center Supports Early Bowel Cancer Detection**

**In March's Bowel Cancer Awareness Month there will be many initiatives throughout Germany to provide information about bowel cancer and to encourage people to participate in early bowel cancer detection programs. The German Cancer Research Center (Deutsches Krebsforschungszentrum, DKFZ) will also participate in the awareness month activities, because recent results obtained at DKFZ show that early detection is particularly effective for this type of cancer. DKFZ's Cancer Information Service will offer an extra telephone line for the topic of bowel cancer prevention throughout the month of March.**

The Cancer Information Service (Krebsinformationsdienst, KID) of the German Cancer Research Center answers questions about cancer from patients, their families and interested members of the public. The telephone service is available daily from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. at the toll-free number 0800-4203040 or can be reached via e-mail at [krebsinformation@dkfz.de](mailto:krebsinformation@dkfz.de). On its website, at [www.krebsinformationsdienst.de](http://www.krebsinformationsdienst.de), the service additionally provides plenty of information on the topic of cancer. The additional line on early bowel cancer detection will be available at the same toll-free number throughout March's Bowel Cancer Awareness Month on workdays from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. On this line, staff members of the Cancer Information Service will provide information about the various possibilities of prevention and early detection of bowel (colorectal) cancer.

A recent study at DKFZ has shown the effectiveness of colonoscopy in colorectal cancer screening. Professor Hermann Brenner and his coworkers have studied the occurrence of colorectal precancerous lesions in a study group of approximately 3,300 people from the Saarland. The investigators found 48% percent less advanced colorectal precancerous lesions in study subjects who had received a colonoscopy within the past 10 years compared to those who took the examination for the first time."Screening colonoscopy, which has been part of the statutory early cancer detection program since 2002, prevents thousands of colorectal cancer cases each year," said Brenner, "and it could be much more if more people participated in it."

To increase participation in preventive bowel cancer screening, DKFZ cooperates with a joint initiative of companies in the Rhine-Neckar region called "Saving 1,000 Lives". Using a questionnaire, the colorectal cancer risk of staff members is determined. In case of an increased risk, the person is offered to take a fecal occult blood test. The initiative will run for three years. Scientific evaluation will be provided by DKFZ's Professor Hermann Brenner and the Psycho-oncology Department of Heidelberg University. Brenner expects that the number of colorectal cancer deaths in the region will be substantially reduced as a result of increased participation in early detection measures.

Factors influencing disease progression in colorectal cancer are studied by Professor Cornelia Ulrich of the National Center for Tumor Diseases Heidelberg (NCT) within the ColoCare Study. Thus, factors such as patients' genetic characteristics, individual tumor properties and lifestyle have an important impact on disease progression. The study aims to find out which therapy promises best results in each individual patient and, at the same time, to show ways for the patients to improve their own prognosis. There are first results

suggesting that a moderate exercise program not only improves the quality of life for cancer patients, but may also delay the recurrence of cancer after treatment.

A picture for this press release is available on the Internet at:  
[www.dkfz.de/de/presse/pressemitteilungen/2010/images/Darmkrebs.jpg](http://www.dkfz.de/de/presse/pressemitteilungen/2010/images/Darmkrebs.jpg)  
Figure caption: Fluorescence staining of a colorectal tissue section  
Photography: Dr. Lutz Langbein, German Cancer Research Center

March's Bowel Cancer Awareness Month has been organized since 2002 every year by the Felix Burda Foundation. During this month, there are plenty of initiatives throughout Germany to provide information about bowel cancer and to encourage people to participate in preventive bowel cancer screening programs. The campaign is supported by many organizations, politicians, celebrities and scientists.

The German Cancer Research Center (Deutsches Krebsforschungszentrum, DKFZ) is the largest biomedical research institute in Germany and is a member of the Helmholtz Association of National Research Centers. More than 2,000 staff members, including 850 scientists, are investigating the mechanisms of cancer and are working to identify cancer risk factors. They provide the foundations for developing novel approaches in the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of cancer. In addition, the staff of the Cancer Information Service (KID) offers information about the widespread disease of cancer for patients, their families, and the general public. The Center is funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (90%) and the State of Baden-Württemberg (10%).

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