

HEALTH ALERT!

Protecting Yourself From Colorectal Cancer

(NAPSA)—It's important for people to be screened for colorectal cancer. That's because doctors say if you're over 50, you're at risk for the disease.

Colorectal cancer is a silent killer that rarely produces symptoms early on and can "sneak up" on you without warning.

In 2002 alone, it's estimated that more than 56,000 Americans will die from colorectal cancer, and more than 140,000 new cases will be diagnosed. Alarmingly, about 75 percent of all new cases occur in men and women with no known risk factors for the disease, other than their age.

The good news is that colorectal cancer is one of the most preventable cancers, especially when detected early. According to the American Society of Colon and Rectal Surgeons (ASCRS), men and women over the age of 50 are considered at "average risk" for developing colorectal cancer and should get annual screenings beginning at age 50.

The key to stopping this killer is early detection. With today's screening techniques, colorectal surgeons can detect and remove pre-cancerous polyps before they become dangerous, and then can reduce colorectal cancer deaths dramatically.

In addition, eating a low-fat,



Colorectal cancer is one of the most treatable forms of cancer—but only if it is detected early.

high-fiber diet, coupled with regular exercise can significantly reduce your risk of developing the disease.

To find out what you can do to increase your chances of preventing, or surviving, colorectal cancer, make an appointment with your colorectal surgeon or other healthcare provider and ask the following questions:

- What is my risk of developing colorectal cancer?
- What screening method is best for me?
- Are there any symptoms that I should be concerned about?
- How is colorectal cancer treated?

For a free brochure on colorectal cancer or to find a colorectal surgeon in your area, visit the ASCRS Web site at www.fascrs.org.