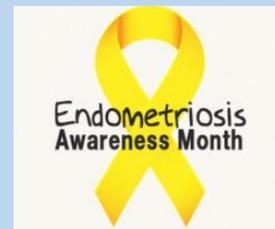


March Hot Topics 2020



Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Awareness Month: Events during March bring attention to new research into the condition and raise awareness of the challenges that people with MS face. Multiple sclerosis, or MS, is a disease of the central nervous system that can cause symptoms throughout the body. It's believed to be an autoimmune condition, in which the immune system mistakenly attacks normal tissues — in MS, the immune system attacks the myelin sheath that normally protects nerve fibers in the brain, spinal cord, and optic nerve. As the myelin sheath is gradually destroyed, the resulting scar tissue (sclerosis) disrupts the electrical impulses between the brain and other parts of the body. But it's not clear what causes the onset of this immune reaction, and most people diagnosed with MS have no known risk factors. For more information go to <https://www.nationalmssociety.org/Get-Involved/Raise-Awareness>

The month of March brings women, families and medical communities together for **Endometriosis Awareness Month**. During this time, millions of people all over the world honor this month to recognize the 176 million women who suffer from this disease. Endometriosis is a disorder in which tissue much like endometrial tissue (the inner lining of the uterus) migrates to areas outside the uterus, like the ovaries and the Fallopian tubes. Endometrial like cells may transport to other parts of the body as well. This causes extreme pain in the pelvic region, and can also cause cysts, adhesions, heavy periods, bleeding between periods, and infertility. This month, we stand together in support of women who suffer from endometriosis, and we push for funding so that a cure can be found. There are different ways to measure endometriosis. The most widely used scale is from the American Society of Reproductive Medicine. Doctors assign points according to the spread of the endometrial tissue, its depth, and the areas of your body that are affected. Based on the results, the condition is ranked in one of four stages:



- Stage 1 or minimal: There a few small implants or small wounds or lesions. They may be found on your organs or the tissue lining your pelvis or abdomen. There's little to no scar tissue.
- Stage 2 or mild: There are more implants than in stage 1. They're also deeper in the tissue, and there may be some scar tissue.
- Stage 3 or moderate: There are many deep implants. You may also have small cysts on one or both ovaries, and thick bands of scar tissue called adhesions.
- Stage 4 or severe: This is the most widespread. You have many deep implants and thick adhesions. There are also large cysts on one or both ovaries. For more information go to <https://www.webmd.com/women/endometriosis/endometriosis-types-stages#1>

March is Colorectal Cancer Awareness: Among cancers that affect both men and women, colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer deaths in the United States. Every year, about 140,000 Americans get colorectal cancer, and more than 50,000 people die from it. Risk increases with age. More than 90% of colorectal cancers occur in people who are 50 years old or older.



Precancerous polyps and colorectal cancer don't always cause symptoms, especially at first. You could have polyps or colorectal cancer and not know it. That is why having a screening test is so important. If you have symptoms, they may include—

Blood in or on the stool (bowel movement). Stomach pain, aches, or cramps that do not go away. Losing weight and you don't know why.

These symptoms may be caused by something other than cancer. If you have any of them, see your doctor. For more information go to <https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/dcpc/resources/features/colorectalawareness/index.htm>