

# TEXAS C-STEP Newsletter

Colon Cancer Screening, Training, Education & Prevention

Texas A&M Health Science Center

9/1/2013

Year 2, Quarter 4

## Texas C-STEP: Expanding Partnerships

The Texas Colon Cancer Screening, Training, Education and Prevention Program, or Texas C-STEP, is a program at the Texas A&M Health Science Center whose success is due in large part to its many clinical and community partners. The program, now entering its third year, is funded by the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas. Texas C-STEP seeks to improve access to colon cancer screening in the Brazos Valley region through provision of free/subsidized colonoscopies to uninsured/underinsured residents, colonoscopy training to family medicine residents at the Texas A&M Family Medicine Center, and community outreach to increase awareness of the program and the importance of colon cancer screening.

During this quarter, Texas C-STEP employees enjoyed partnering with Buckingham Gardens Apartment in Navasota and Greater First Baptist Church in Anderson, Texas, to offer educational tips on colon health.

A meeting with the Concerned Black Men of the Brazos Valley provided C-STEP with an opportunity to brainstorm with members of the organization on ways to improve colon cancer awareness among black males. C-STEP community health workers were delighted to attend the August 17<sup>th</sup> Back-to-School Party sponsored by the organization, which provides enrichment and mentoring to youth.

C-STEP also participated in the 19<sup>th</sup> annual Back-to-School Health and Information Fair held at First Baptist Church in Bryan, Texas, where interested age-eligible participants registered for colonoscopy. C-STEP distributed water bottles to the school-age children in attendance and literature on colon cancer prevention to interested adults.

For more information, visit our website at [www.texascstep.org](http://www.texascstep.org)

## Success in Numbers

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In the first two years of this grant, starting Sept. 1, 2011

◎ 750 people have received CRC screening at the Texas A&M Family Medicine Center

◎ 3,407 Brazos Valley residents have been educated directly about colon cancer

◎ Thousands of Brazos Valley residents have had an opportunity to learn more about colon cancer through media, flyers and brochures



Texas C-STEP community health workers volunteer at the 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Back-to-school Health and Information Fair sponsored by Chaplain Services.



## Diet and Colon Cancer: Why Fiber?

Colon, or colorectal, cancer is cancer that originates in the large intestine. It is the second most common cause of cancer-related deaths in the United States. Colon cancer almost always begins as abnormal cell growths in the intestine known as polyps. These polyps may reside in the colon for 7-10 years, or longer, before becoming cancerous. Screening for colon cancer (colonoscopy) can find these precancerous polyps and remove them before they turn into cancer, making colon cancer highly PREVENTABLE.

### Examples of Fiber Sources

Cooked kidney beans (1/2 cup) - 8 grams

Cooked split peas (1/2 cup) - 8 grams

Whole wheat pasta (1 cup) - 6 grams

100% Bran cereal (1/2 cup) - 9 grams

Raw apple with skin (1) - 3 grams

Raw pear (1) - 4 grams

Cooked broccoli (1/2 cup) - 8 grams

Whole wheat English muffin (1) - 4 grams

Researchers agree that other ways to minimize risk for colon cancer include limiting intake of red meats and processed meats (e.g., sausage, bacon and ham). A healthy diet low in fat and high in fiber may also reduce colon cancer risk; dietary fiber has a protective effect on the colon.

The fiber we eat is obtained from plant sources – i.e., fruits, vegetables and whole grains. The Institute of Medicine recommends a total dietary fiber intake of 38 grams/day for males between ages 31 and 50; 25 grams/day for females in the same age group. Males older than 50 years should eat 30grams/day, while females older than 50 should eat 21 grams/day. (See **Fiber Sources**, this page.)

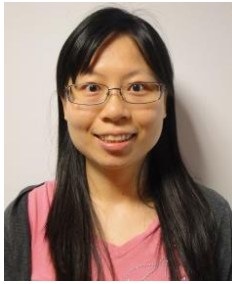
Researchers at the National Institutes of Health have found that individuals who consume food high in whole grains are less likely to have colorectal cancer than those who do not. Whole grains are grains that have not been processed (refined) to remove healthy components such as bran and germ. The CDC reports that at least half the grains consumed by an individual should be whole grain.

Fiber appears to have several mechanisms responsible for its protective effect against colon cancer. It increases the frequency of bowel movements, thereby decreasing the duration of contact between possible cancer-causing chemicals in the stool and the lining of the intestine. It is not digested or absorbed, but undergoes fermentation in the colon which changes the condition of the bowel (lowers fecal pH) and generates a helpful fatty acid called butyrate. This product can both inhibit tumor cell growth in the colon and promote healthy cells in the intestinal lining. Red meat, on the other hand, contains a chemical known as heme that may enable bacteria in the bowel to produce a cell-damaging substance known as N-nitroso compounds. The body tries to repair the damage by rapidly producing more cells. This increases the chance of producing abnormal or tumor cells.

Please visit [www.texasstep.org](http://www.texasstep.org) for more information or call Rosa/Brenda at 979-436-0443/979-436-0449. *Se habla Español.*



## MEET OUR Community Health Workers



**Wei-Chen 'Miso' Lee** is one of the volunteer community health workers (CHW) for

the C-STEP program. During health fairs, Miso provides information about colon cancer prevention and Texas C-STEP services. She also conducts one-on-one appointments with individuals to assess their risk for colon cancer.

Miso is fluent in Mandarin and English. This has enabled her to provide culturally-relevant patient navigation to Mandarin patients during prep visits and colonoscopies at the Texas A&M Physicians Family Medicine Center.

Miso is also a certified Ombudsman who advocates for the civil rights of residents at long-term care settings. Originally from Taiwan, Miso is pursuing a doctoral degree in Health Services Research at the Texas A&M School of Rural Public Health.

In her spare time, she enjoys going to church, cooking, and attending events organized by the Taiwanese Student Association, Tzu Chi Foundation, and Bridges.

**Rosa Hernandez** is another one of the CHWs for the C-STEP program. She works full-time in

the Texas A&M Physicians Family Medicine Center where she serves as a bridge between the clinical staff and patients. Rosa visits



clinics in the rural counties to inform them about the program.

Rosa is from Bryan, Texas, and is fluent in Spanish. She has a degree in Sociology from Texas A&M University. Rosa is a past president of the City of Bryan's Citizen's Police Academy alumni organization; she is still actively involved with the organization.

Rosa enjoys "Helping patients feel as comfortable and well informed as possible and knowing that I helped bridge the gap between patients and healthcare providers." During her spare time, she enjoys spending time with family and friends, and learning more about photography and design.

As a volunteer CHW for C-STEP, **Divya Talwar** has been involved in



creating awareness of the program during health fairs. She also conducts colon cancer

risk assessment for interested participants. She enjoys interacting with people during the fairs. She particularly enjoys working with

participants with negative attitudes to colonoscopy and dispelling associated myths.

Divya is originally from India. She practiced dentistry for 2 years prior to coming to the United States to obtain a Master of Public Health degree. She is currently pursuing a doctorate in the Department of Health Education at Texas A&M University.

Divya loves traveling. She also engages in palmistry (reading hands) just for fun.

## Spotlight on Collaboration



The Bridge Medical Ministry, a secondary ministry outreach of The Bridge Ministries was started in October 2011. It is a non-profit clinic which provides free medical care to Brazos Valley residents every 1st and 3rd Tuesday in downtown Bryan.

Basic medical coverage for chronic diseases such as hypertension and diabetes are provided at the clinic by volunteer staff. Back to school physicals and other minor healthcare needs are also provided.

A joint effort of , Dr. Stuart Quartemont, Dr. Karim Haji and a team of volunteers, The Bridge Medical Ministry has allowed C-STEP community health workers to talk with its clients about the importance of colon cancer screening.

## Visit Our Website

<http://texascstep.org/>

## General Information

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## Referrals/Appointments

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**Thank you to  
these referral  
sources!**

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