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Contacts: Colleen Fogarty, ACG, mediaonly@gi.org
Anne Brownsey, ASGE, abrownsey@asge.org
Aimee Frank, AGA, AFrank@gastro.org

**New CDC Report Shows Colorectal Cancer Tests are Underused:
23 Million American Adults Have Never Been Tested**

Bethesda, Maryland (November 5, 2013) – Colorectal cancer screening (CRC) rates remain too low, with about one in three adults (ages 50 to 75 years) not being tested for colorectal cancer, according to a new Vital Signs report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The CDC's Vital Signs report also found that 23 million adults in the United States have not had the recommended screenings despite research showing colorectal cancer tests save lives. One of the major findings in the new report states that: "Among adults who were screened as recommended, colonoscopy was by far the most common screening test (62 percent). Use of the other USPSTF-recommended tests was much lower: fecal occult blood test (10 percent), and flexible sigmoidoscopy in combination with FOBT/FIT (less than 1 percent)."

"As a nation, we can do better in screening eligible patients for colorectal cancer," commented Harry E. Sarles, Jr., M.D., FACG, President of the American College of Gastroenterology (ACG). "The American College of Gastroenterology urges consumers to be screened for colorectal cancer and is dedicated to the remarkable effectiveness and safety of colonoscopy in the hands of trained and skilled colonoscopists. When detected early, polyps can be removed, preventing the development of colorectal cancer. That is what makes colonoscopy such a powerful prevention strategy."

"More than half the patients who will die of colorectal cancer this year could have been saved by early screening. We can, we must, do better," said Anil K. Rustgi, M.D., AGAF, AGA Institute President and Chief of Gastroenterology at the University of Pennsylvania Perelman School of Medicine.

"The American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy recommends that screening begin at age 50. A person at average risk with normal screening results won't need another exam for 10 years. If polyps or cancer are found, screening intervals will be more frequent, so we encourage patients to talk with their doctor about keeping up-to-date with screening exams," said Kenneth K. Wang, M.D., FASGE, president, American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy. "Colonoscopy is considered the preferred screening method because it is a preventive exam: it is the only test that both finds and removes precancerous polyps during the same exam. With other methods, if a polyp or other abnormality is suspected, the test must often be verified by a colonoscopy. In addition, all other methods depend on the ability of colonoscopy to remove the polyp to decrease the risk of cancer."

Colonoscopy is an effective test for colon cancer screening because detection and removal of pre-cancerous lesions can prevent many cancers. While any of the approved screening tests is better than none, consumers should know that colonoscopy offers important benefits in terms of polyp removal, breaking the sequence from polyp to cancer, and reducing the number of deaths from colorectal cancer.

The CDC's Vital Signs is a monthly call to action, featuring an important public health topic. To review the CDC's new Vital Signs report on CRC screening, visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/>.

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About the American College of Gastroenterology

Founded in 1932, the American College of Gastroenterology (ACG) is an organization with an international membership of more than 12,000 individuals from 80 countries. The College's vision is to be the pre-eminent professional organization that champions the evolving needs of clinicians in the delivery of high quality, evidence-based, and compassionate health care to gastroenterology patients. The mission of the College is to advance world-class care for patients with gastrointestinal disorders through excellence, innovation and advocacy in the areas of scientific investigation, education, prevention and treatment. www.gi.org

About the AGA Institute

The American Gastroenterological Association is the trusted voice of the GI community. Founded in 1897, the AGA has grown to include 17,000 members from around the globe who are involved in all aspects of the science, practice and advancement of gastroenterology. The AGA Institute administers the practice, research and educational programs of the organization. www.gastro.org/

About the American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy

Since its founding in 1941, the American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy (ASGE) has been dedicated to advancing patient care and digestive health by promoting excellence and innovation in gastrointestinal endoscopy. ASGE, with more than 12,000 members worldwide, promotes the highest standards for endoscopic training and practice, fosters endoscopic research, recognizes distinguished contributions to endoscopy, and is the foremost resource for endoscopic education. Visit www.asge.org and www.screen4coloncancer.org for more information and to find a qualified doctor in your area.

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