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Celebrated Canadians support Colon Cancer Canada

2012 campaign begins with Colon Cancer Awareness Month and impactful public service announcements

March is Colon Cancer Awareness Month, and Colon Cancer Canada is launching its 2012 campaign with the help of some high profile Canadians through a hard-hitting public service announcement (PSA) campaign that promotes the message that when it comes to colon cancer, silence can be deadly and people need to talk about it.

Canadian celebrities involved in the campaign include Olympic medalist Adam van Koeverden, singing legend Anne Murray, hockey legend Darryl Sittler, actress Emman-

uelle Chriqui, actor Neil Crone and colon cancer survivor Pamela Wallin.

"We are pleased and honoured to have these well-known Canadians on board with our campaign," said Amy Elmaleh, co-founder of Colon Cancer Canada. "They all have a personal story that brought them to Colon Cancer Canada and we couldn't be more proud of them for stepping up and giving their time to help us get our important message across."

Colon cancer is the second leading cause of both male and female cancer-related deaths in Canada. In 2011 over 22,200 Canadians were diagnosed with colon cancer. What is even more startling is the fact that almost half of those diagnosed

died. This is because nearly half of those diagnosed found out too late. Colon cancer is one of the most preventable forms of cancer. If caught early, over 90 per cent of cases could and should result in a full recovery.

"One of the issues surrounding colon cancer and the reason so many people don't get the help they need is the fear of talking about it," said Amy Elmaleh. "For some reason, there is a stigma attached to the disease that we need to dispel and do so quickly. We are hoping our PSA campaign will get the word out that knowing the signs of colon cancer and talking about it with your family and your doctor will result in prevention and an effective cure."

FAST FACTS on Colon Cancer

Colon Cancer by the Numbers:

- It is the second leading cause of male and female cancer-related deaths in Canada.
- Colon cancer is one of the most preventable forms of cancer. If screened and caught early – the chances of survival increase by 90%. Unfortunately as it stands today, nearly half of those diagnosed find out too late.
- Colon cancer is the third most commonly diagnosed cancer.
- In 2011, 22,200 Canadians were diagnosed with colon cancer – 9,500 died.

- Anyone 50 and up should be screened regardless of family history and earlier if you are at higher risk.

Risk Factors:

- There is no "single cause" for developing this disease, but there are several risk factors that include:
- A family history of colon cancer
 - Increasing age (risk increases from the age of 50)
 - Polyps present in the colon or rectum
 - A diet high in fat

- An inactive lifestyle
- Obesity
- Inflammatory bowel disease

Signs and Symptoms:

- Change in bowel movements
- Blood in stool
- Abdominal discomfort
- Weight loss for no apparent reason
- Feeling that the bowel is not emptying completely
- Narrower than usual stools
- Feelings of weakness or feeling more tired than normal

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