

SCREENINGS

Colonoscopy: For him, for her, for life



IT WAS SOMETHING she'd been dreading for years, but Tresha Kramer, 52, says it actually turned out to be a pleasant experience—as far as health procedures go.

Tresha and her husband, Danny, 62, recently scheduled a couples colonoscopy at the Redwood Health Center.

“It was such a comfort to have my husband there, and doing this together made me a lot braver,” Tresha says.

A colonoscopy allows a doctor to look at the inner lining of the large intestines by using a colonoscope, a thin, flexible tube attached to a video camera. The doctor looks for ulcers, polyps, tumors, and areas of inflammation or bleeding—sometimes taking a biopsy. Most important, this procedure can check for cancer or precancerous cells.

DISPELLING MYTHS

“One of the biggest myths surrounding colon cancer is that you have to have symptoms to have it, when in fact it can be completely asymptomatic,” says Rick Craig, M.D., a gastroenterologist with University Health Care. That’s why it is so important to get screened.

The fears surrounding colonoscopy aren’t warranted, according to Dr. Craig. “That’s it?” and “You’re done?” are the typical responses of

disbelief he hears after completing the 30-minute procedure.

Colonoscopy is not surgery, and you remain in a state of conscious sedation, which means you are essentially sleeping but can be aroused if necessary. You walk away with no memory of the procedure.

EARLY DETECTION—FOR BOTH OF YOU

52,000 Americans will die from colon cancer this year.

“Many of these deaths could be prevented,” Dr. Craig says. “Early detection with a diagnostic colonoscopy means early treatment.”

Colon cancer patients who get early treatment


have much higher survival rates than those who start treatment in later stages of the disease.

“We want to raise awareness of the importance of this test and dispel the fear that some people have about it,” Dr. Craig says. “A colonoscopy should be viewed as a routine part of health care for anyone over 50 years of age.”

Everyone older than 50 should have a colonoscopy. Call 801-213-9797.

SCREENING FOR TWO

“For once in my life, I found a medical procedure that can be done with someone else,” Danny says. “And who better than my wife, who knows how to calm me down and keep me optimistic.” He adds that he won’t hesitate to do it again.

This date is about love, not romance. To make an appointment or to get more information, call 801-213-9797. 



Rick Craig, M.D.



Tresha and Danny Kramer toast each other with apple juice after their colonoscopies.