



BROWN MEDICINE

Insider

Spring 2023

Colorectal Cancer on the Rise Among Young People

While colorectal cancer has long been one of the most common cancers among older adults, now doctors are seeing an increasing number of cases among younger Americans, according to a new report released by the American Cancer Society in March.

Between 1995 and 2019, the share of patients with this type of cancer went up from 11% to 20% in those 54 years or younger, even as the size of this demographic group shrunk slightly. According to the new data, between 2011 and 2020, death rates for individuals younger than 50 went up by one percent each year. A study published in JAMA in 2021 estimated that by 2040, colorectal cancer will be the leading cause of cancer deaths in people ages 20-49.

Among those younger Americans who died from the disease was Black Panther actor Chadwick Boseman in 2020, at the age of 43.

Risk factors putting younger people at risk for colon cancer may include higher rates of obesity, sedentary lifestyles, eating diets rich in sugars and processed foods, genetic and family history; studies are underway to investigate the role of environmental factors.

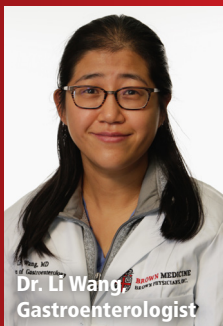
“We have to address why the rates in young adults continue to trend in the wrong direction,” said Ahmedin Jemal, DVM, PhD, Senior Vice President, Surveillance & Health Equity Science at the American Cancer Society, and the senior author of this study. “We need to invest more in research to uncover the causes of the rising trends and to discover new treatment for advanced-stage diseases to reduce the morbidity and mortality associated with this disease in this young population, who are raising families and supporting other family members.”



For their part, adults should follow the American Cancer Society’s guidelines for colon cancer screening. The first step, for those who are at average risk, is to be screened starting at age 45, the results of which usually determine how often screening should be done. Adults should also work with their primary care providers to determine if they may be at an increased risk for colon cancer. Factors which may put someone at increased risk include a positive family history of precancerous (adenomatous) polyps or colon cancer particularly in a first degree relative, inflammatory bowel disease, and a family history of a genetic syndrome (Lynch syndrome, Familial Adenomatous Polyposis). Patients at increased risk should start screening earlier than 45.

Despite the concern about younger adults, the report did have some positive news. Overall, the five-year survival rate for colorectal cancer has gone from 50% in the mid-1970s to 65% in recent years.

For more information about screening guidelines, click [here](#). The American Cancer Society report is available [here](#).



Hear Dr. Li Wang discuss the importance of detecting colon cancer early.



[Click Here!](#)

CONGRATULATIONS
Dr. Kwame Dapaah-Afriyie



HEALTH CARE HERO NOMINEE

Health Care Hero

Congratulations to Brown Medicine’s **Dr. Kwame Dapaah-Afriyie** for being nominated as a PBN Health Care Hero!

From Combat to Health Care: How Veterans Successfully Transition to Civilian Careers

By Frank Lennon

Transitioning from military service to civilian life can be challenging, and perhaps the most important challenge is finding the right employment when your military commitment ends.

Over the next year we will give examples of how military service can lead to rewarding careers in various industries. Along the way, we will give a shout-out to veterans who are making a difference in their new civilian jobs.

For the full story highlighting Brown Medicine’s Brad Crough and Michael Machost, click [here](#).

Employee of the Quarter

OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2022

Congratulations to Susana Furtado - Nappi, Revenue Cycle Specialist II, for being named the October-December 2022 Employee of the Quarter.

Thank you, Susana, for your hard work and ongoing dedication to Brown Medicine!



Susana Furtado-Nappi
Revenue Cycle Specialist II

Career Achiever Award

Congratulations to CEO of Brown Medicine, Ann Kashmanian, for being recognized as a Career Achiever in the Providence Business News C-Suite Awards!



Go Blue Event 2023

In recognition of Colon Cancer Awareness Month, Brown Medicine’s Endoscopy Center held a public information event on March 16, 2023, at East Providence City Hall.

The free, public event was open to people of all ages and was designed to remind people that colon cancer is preventable, beatable, and treatable, especially when discovered early.

Educational exhibits provided useful information on the importance of colon cancer screening. Welcoming remarks were offered from East Providence Mayor Roberto DaSilva and East Providence Area Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Laura McNamara. Additionally, Dr. Harlan Rich, Medical Director of Brown Medicine’s Endoscopy Center, discussed the significance of screening and early detection.

In commemoration of Colon Cancer Awareness Month, guests wore blue in support of survivors and for those still fighting. A giant colon was also on display to provide a first-hand look at colon disease. In addition, to raise further awareness, entertainment was provided by the Greene-Roy Academy of Irish Step Dancers who joined in the fight to stomp out colon cancer.

[Visit our page for more information.](#)



Left to right:
Mayor Roberto DaSilva, Dr. Harlan Rich, & Laura McNamara



Brown Medicine Awards Jessica Savoca Manager of the Year



Dr. Louis Rice, President and Physician-in-Chief of Brown Medicine, presents Jessica Savoca with a service award in acknowledgment of seven years with the organization.

Jessica Savoca has been with Brown Medicine for seven years and has recently been awarded Manager of the Year for 2022. Savoca is grateful for the opportunity to take on new roles and responsibilities, as well as being able to grow within the organization. “People [here] want to see you succeed. We work together as a team leveraging each other’s strengths and I think that’s just a great atmosphere to be a part of,” said Savoca.



Her passion for helping people on a broader scale initially led her to the healthcare industry. She states, “I have always been interested in working with people...growing up in a small family, I just always felt a sense of appreciation for being able to help.”



After graduating from Rhode Island College in 2011 with a Bachelor’s in Psychology, Savoca started her career as a mental health professional. She began working as a case manager and over time was exposed to more administrative functions. Soon after, she earned her Master’s in Public Health.



Providence Business News presents Jessica Savoca with the 40 Under Forty Award

She took on the role of project coordinator at Brown Medicine in 2015. To strengthen her administrative skills, she obtained an MBA from the University of Rhode Island in 2019, which prompted a promotion to Quality Administrator, where she began managing multiple people for the first time.

In her current role as Manager of Quality Initiatives and Project Management, she oversees a team of four medical assistants and medical secretaries who assist the practices to maintain operational efficiencies, as well as managing staff in the quality department.

Savoca is grateful for the opportunities to take on new roles and responsibilities at Brown Medicine and grow within the organization.

Celebrating National Kidney Month:

THE IMPORTANCE OF KIDNEY HEALTH



March is National Kidney Month, a time dedicated to raising awareness about kidney disease and the importance of kidney health. The kidneys play a critical role in removing waste and excess fluid from the body, regulating blood pressure, and maintaining proper electrolyte balance. Therefore, it is essential to take care of our kidneys to prevent kidney disease.

Kidney disease is a silent killer and often goes unnoticed until it is in its advanced stages. According to the National Kidney Foundation, one in three Americans is at risk of developing kidney disease, and more than 37 million Americans have kidney disease, but many of them are unaware of it. Kidney disease can lead to kidney failure, which requires dialysis or a kidney transplant to survive.

Key risk factors for kidney disease include high blood pressure, diabetes, age older than 60 years and a family history of kidney disease. Lifestyle choices such as smoking and being overweight or obese can also increase risk. Moreover, certain medications, such as nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), can damage the kidneys. Therefore, it is essential to control blood pressure and blood sugar levels, maintain a healthy weight, avoid smoking, and discuss with your healthcare team your individual risks and benefits of chronic NSAID use.

Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) is a condition where the kidneys gradually lose function over time and is sustained over at least 3 months. CKD is often caused by underlying medical conditions, such as high blood pressure, obesity and diabetes, which can damage the kidneys' blood vessels and structures. According to Dr. Kelley Doherty Sanzen, clinical pharmacist and Director of Quality Programs with Brown Medicine's Division of Kidney Disease and Hypertension, "some studies have reported the incidence of obesity-related glomerulopathy, a generic disease of the renal glomerulus which affects

the filtering units of your kidney, having increased 10-fold in recent years. Obesity has also been shown to be a risk factor for nephrolithiasis (kidney stones) and for a number of malignancies including kidney cancer." Obesity and diabetes are significant risk factors for CKD, so adopting a healthy lifestyle that includes regular exercise, a healthy diet, and weight management is essential for self-management.

Acute Kidney Injury (AKI) is a sudden loss of kidney function that can occur as a result of various medical conditions, including dehydration, sepsis, and medication toxicity. Diabetes, hypertension, and advanced age are primary risk factors for AKI.



Dr. Kelley Doherty Sanzen

"Acute Kidney Injury is common and costly. Some data reports that it represents 8-16% of hospital admissions and is responsible for high costs to the US healthcare system" said Dr. Doherty Sanzen. AKI can lead to fluid and electrolyte imbalances, as well as waste buildup in the body.

Treatment of AKI typically involves addressing the underlying cause, managing fluid and electrolyte imbalances, and potentially providing dialysis to remove waste products from the body. People who are at increased risk of AKI, such as those with pre-existing kidney disease or other medical conditions, should be closely monitored and take steps to prevent it.

One of the most effective ways to prevent kidney disease is to undergo regular kidney function tests, such as blood and urine tests. The tests can detect early signs of kidney damage, and prompt

treatment can slow down or prevent the progression of kidney disease. Dr. Kelley Doherty Sanzen said, "the American Diabetes Association recommends measuring eGFR and urine albumin annually and this is also a quality measure for our primary care practices." These quick and easy lab tests can be a great tool to assess for function and damage as well as disease progression".

National Kidney Month is an opportunity to raise awareness about kidney disease and encourage people to take care of their kidneys. By making lifestyle changes, getting regular kidney function tests, and managing any underlying medical conditions, we can reduce our risk of kidney disease.

Watch Dr. Kelley Doherty Sanzen discuss Kidney Health on Studio 10



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