

# Congressional Families Cancer Prevention Program®

of the Prevent Cancer Foundation®



SPRING/  
SUMMER  
2019

## ACTIONS

WWW.CONGRESSIONALFAMILIES.ORG

## COLORECTAL CANCER: TOO YOUNG FOR THIS...

Colorectal cancer is often thought of as an “old person’s disease,” but it’s becoming more common among younger adults (under age 50). On April 22, Congressional Families hosted a live webcast, “The Rise of Early-Onset Colorectal Cancer,” at the National Association of Broadcasters studios to educate the public about this alarming trend and focus the attention of young adults through the Prevent Cancer Foundation’s edgy new awareness campaign called “Too Young for this Sh\*t.”

Congressional Families Executive Director **Lisa McGovern** opened the webcast, which was moderated by **Dr. John Marshall**, founding director of the Otto J. Ruesch Center for the Cure of Gastrointestinal (GI) Cancers at Georgetown Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center. The panel featured **Dr. Kimmie Ng**, founding director of the Young Onset Colorectal Cancer Center at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute; **Patrick Beauregard**, a 31-year-old colorectal cancer patient/advocate (of Dr. Ng’s); and **Lisa Berry Edwards**, Managing Director of External Affairs for the Prevent Cancer Foundation®.

Dr. Marshall offered his perspective as an experienced GI doctor who has seen an increase in the number of younger patients in his own practice in recent years. Dr. Ng highlighted the disturbing rise in colorectal cancer in younger adults compared to declining rates of colorectal cancer among those over age 50 (which experts credit to screening). She gave an overview of Dana Farber’s Young Onset Colorectal Cancer Center and its programs that address the unique challenges faced by young colorectal patients, including fertility questions, mental health and financial concerns.

*(continued on page 4)*



*L to R: Lisa McGovern, Dr. John Marshall, Dr. Kimmie Ng, Patrick Beauregard, Lisa Berry Edwards*

## DID YOU KNOW...?

- ▶ According to a 2017 American Cancer Society study, adults born in 1990 have twice the risk of colon cancer and four times the risk of rectal cancer compared to adults born around 1950.
- ▶ Experts think lifestyle factors—not exercising, being obese or overweight, drinking alcohol in excess and eating a low-fiber diet with lots of red and processed meats—likely play a role in the rise in colorectal cancer among generation X and millennials. That said, more research needs to be done.
- ▶ Last year, the American Cancer Society lowered the recommended screening age to 45 (down from 50), a decision the Prevent Cancer Foundation® supports. The colonoscopy is the most effective screening test, but there are at-home tests you can do if you can’t or won’t have a colonoscopy.
- ▶ Symptoms usually don’t appear until the cancer advances, when it’s more difficult to treat. If you do experience blood in or on the stool, stomachaches or cramps that don’t go away or unexplained weight loss, talk to your doctor and don’t be afraid to get a second opinion.



**CONGRESSIONAL FAMILIES  
CANCER PREVENTION PROGRAM®**  
of the Prevent Cancer Foundation®

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## LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dear Congressional Families members and friends,

Sometimes when I tell people that I work for the Prevent Cancer Foundation®, the response is: “But you can’t prevent cancer.” And while that is true of some cancers, your risk for many cancers can be greatly reduced. According to experts, with what we know right now, up to 50% of cancer cases are preventable. That’s knowledge worth sharing.

When the Congressional Families Cancer Prevention Program® was founded in 1991, we focused on just two preventable cancers—breast and prostate. As progress has been made, our efforts have expanded to include nine cancers, as well as cancers caused by viruses.

It’s inspiring to see the impact being made and the lives being saved. But still there is much work to be done. Colorectal cancer is on the rise in younger adults, and experts aren’t yet sure why (read more on pages 1 and 4). Until more is known about this trend, we can do our part by raising awareness and educating younger adults about the disease and ways to advocate for themselves.

Here’s what we do know: eating healthy, not smoking, limiting alcohol and being physically active can reduce our risk of many cancers, screening can find certain cancers early (when successful treatment is more likely) or before they even start, and vaccines can prevent viruses that can lead to cancer. As congressional spouses, we have a unique platform to share this knowledge with people across the U.S.

Congressional Families is a small part of the cancer prevention community, but we can and do make a big impact. To those currently involved, keep up the good work. To others, join us! **Let us know how you would like to be involved, what issues interest you and your community, and how we can support you.** Cancer prevention starts with YOU. We can all do something—and together, we make a difference.

Sincerely,

Lisa McGovern, Executive Director

## SAVE THE DATE

### Thursday, September 26, 2019

## 27th Annual Action for Cancer Awareness Awards Luncheon

Members Room, Library of Congress

## THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS



## WELCOMING OUR NEW EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS

We welcomed several more spouses to the Congressional Families Executive Council this winter. Joining our leadership team to educate the public and help save lives across all populations through cancer prevention and early detection are **Martha Brooks** (spouse of Rep. Mo Brooks of Alabama), **Karmen Walker Brown** (spouse of Rep. Anthony Brown of Maryland), **Mikey Hoeven** (spouse of Sen. John Hoeven of North Dakota), **Laina Marshall** (spouse of Rep. Roger Marshall of Kansas) and **Mary McKinley** (spouse of Rep. David McKinley of West Virginia). They have already brought great energy and ideas to the program, and we look forward to working with them to strengthen the program and broaden our impact.



Martha Brooks



Karmen Walker Brown



Mikey Hoeven



Laina Marshall



Mary McKinley

## SHINING THE LIGHT ON SUNSCREEN REGULATION

Skin cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in the U.S. and most cases are caused by sun exposure. Earlier this year, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) outlined a proposal for new sunscreen regulations to ensure the safest and most effective products are on the market. Then-FDA Commissioner **Scott Gottlieb** noted in a statement that “some of the essential requirements for these preventive tools haven’t been updated in decades,” despite innovations in the sunscreen industry. Here are some highlights from the proposal:

### INGREDIENT SAFETY AND EFFECTIVENESS

The list of hard-to-pronounce ingredients on sunscreen bottles might not mean much to most people, but the FDA is taking a harder look at them. Out of 16 ingredients used in sunscreens, the FDA considers only zinc oxide and titanium dioxide safe and effective. Two ingredients—aminobenzoic acid (PABA) and trolamine salicylate—have been deemed harmful and ineffective, though they aren’t found in sunscreens currently on the market. Another ingredient, oxybenzone, has recently made news with legislation in Hawaii and Key West, Florida, that bans the sale of any sunscreens which contain the ingredient due to the potential impact on coral reefs. The FDA has called on sunscreen manufacturers to provide information on the other 12 ingredients that may be in their products to help inform which of those (if any) are potentially unsafe.

### TYPE OF SUNSCREEN APPLICATION

Sunscreen now comes in a variety of forms—oils, lotions, creams, gels, butters, pastes, ointments and sticks. However, the FDA is calling for more data from sunscreen companies on powders to determine whether they are safe and effective.

### SPF (SUN PROTECTION FACTOR) AND BROAD SPECTRUM REQUIREMENTS

The FDA is proposing the maximum SPF level be raised from 50+ to 60+. It also proposes that any sunscreen with SPF 15+ must be broad spectrum (meaning it protects against both UVA and UVB rays), and for UV protection to increase as the SPF increases.

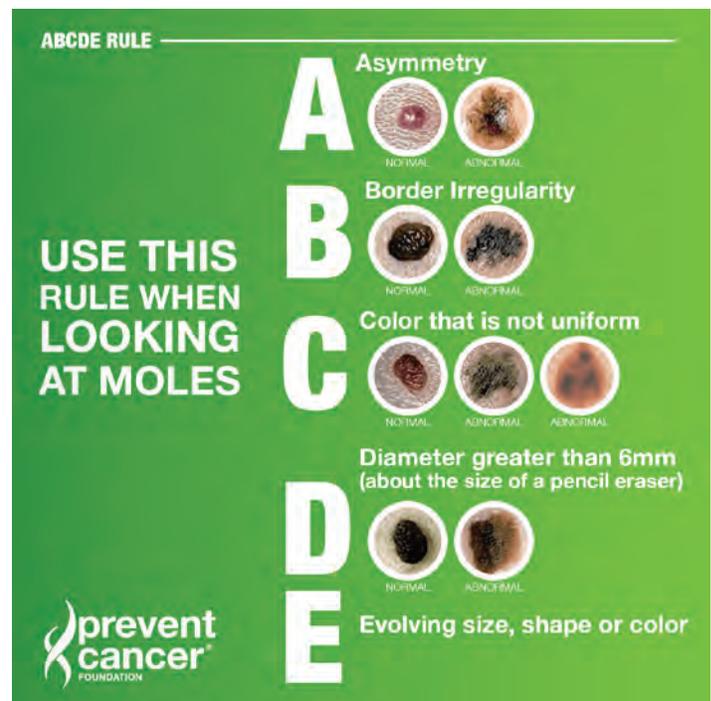
### LABEL REQUIREMENTS

The new proposal would require ingredients to be listed alphabetically; sunscreens below SPF 15 to include “See Skin Cancer/Skin Aging alert” on the front; and labels to more prominently display SPF, broad spectrum and water resistance information.

### WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The FDA accepted public comments through May, and by the end of the year, it will issue a final rule. In the meantime, continue to use broad spectrum sunscreen with SPF 30 or higher, wear hats, sunglasses, and clothing that shields your arms and legs when you spend time outdoors, and avoid the sun between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. **To learn more about skin cancer, visit [www.preventcancer.org/skincancer](http://www.preventcancer.org/skincancer).**

Source: U.S. Food and Drug Administration



## SPOTLIGHT ON MARCELLE LEAHY: Nurse, Melanoma Survivor, Mom, Advocate

Congratulations are in order for Marcelle Leahy (spouse of Sen. Patrick Leahy of Vermont), who has long served as a Congressional Families Executive Council member and is a sustaining board member of the Prevent Cancer Foundation®. Marcelle was recognized with an honorary degree from the University of Vermont (UVM) at its spring commencement ceremony on May 19. A licensed registered nurse and melanoma survivor, Marcelle has contributed her personal and professional experience in her home state, serving on boards including the Vermont Visiting Nurse Association and the Vermont Nursing Initiatives Project. She has been an engaged member of UVM’s College of Nursing and Health Sciences Board of Advisors for 20 years and honorary chair of the Vermont National Guard Family Readiness and Support Program. Heartfelt congratulations to Marcelle on this well-deserved recognition—she is an inspiration to us all!



## COLORECTAL CANCER: TOO YOUNG FOR THIS...

(continued from page 1)

The most moving part of the broadcast came from Patrick who shared his personal experience as a young colon cancer patient. At the age of 29, shortly after returning from his honeymoon, he experienced severe stomach pains that led him to the emergency room and an eventual diagnosis of stage 4 colon cancer. He had been the picture of health—an athletic Marine who thought he was doing all the right things. Dr. Ng noted his similarities to her other young patients who often reported eating a healthy diet and exercising regularly prior to their diagnosis.

**“Cancer was the last thing on my mind,” Patrick said. “I thought there is no way I have this cancer in my body and don’t know about it.”**

Patrick has undergone more than 30 rounds of chemotherapy and is now beginning a new clinical trial. Dr. Ng stressed the need for more research to better understand what makes early-onset colorectal cancer different from the disease affecting older adults.

Like Patrick, most young adults without a family history of colorectal cancer would not associate their symptoms with this disease—and even doctors can be slow to consider it. That’s why the Prevent Cancer Foundation® created the **“Too Young for This Sh\*t”** campaign that uses cheeky graphics to showcase symptoms associated with colorectal cancer and encourage conversations with health professionals if symptoms are experienced. **Read more about the campaign at [www.tooyoungforthis.org](http://www.tooyoungforthis.org).**



HAVEN'T GONE  
IN DAYS?

You may think you're  
**too young  
for this sh\*t,**  
but colorectal cancer  
is on the rise in  
younger adults.

[tooyoungforthis.org](http://tooyoungforthis.org)

preventcancer  
FOUNDATION

The panelists engaged in a lively Q&A session, discussing screening recommendations, how to spot symptoms, and the need to be an advocate—for oneself as a patient, and also to bring more attention to this alarming trend. Congressional spouses have a unique platform to raise awareness. Dr. Marshall noted that it was a political spouse—first lady Betty Ford—who helped bring breast cancer out of the shadows following her own battle with the disease. It is time for us shine a light on colorectal cancer and end the stigma around discussing this disease.

**Watch the full conversation at [www.bit.ly/TYFTS](http://www.bit.ly/TYFTS) and please share it with others through email and social media.**



## POSTING WITH A PURPOSE: MAKING AN IMPACT THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

You may have noticed we’ve been getting a little more “social” recently. Congressional Families is now distributing weekly social media posts for spouses to share, highlighting facts or tips related to the monthly cancer observance (e.g., Skin Cancer Awareness Month) or another relevant occurrence, such as National Women’s Health Week. We hope you’ll share these educational posts with your followers on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. If you aren’t receiving this information and would like to, email Lisa at [Lisa.McGovern@preventcancer.org](mailto:Lisa.McGovern@preventcancer.org).

Thank you to the following Senators, Members and spouses who have shared posts on social media in recent months.

- ▶ Ann Ashford – Nebraska
- ▶ Amanda Banks – Indiana
- ▶ Norma Cárdenas – California
- ▶ Deserai Crow – Colorado
- ▶ Pat Engel – New York
- ▶ Sen. Mike Enzi – Wyoming
- ▶ Phil Frank – Wisconsin
- ▶ Patti Garamendi – California
- ▶ Lorena Gonzalez – Texas
- ▶ Mary Himes – Connecticut
- ▶ LeeAnn Johnson – Ohio
- ▶ Wayne Kye – New York
- ▶ Rep. Dave Loebsack – Iowa
- ▶ Laina Marshall – Kansas
- ▶ Rep. Roger Marshall – Kansas
- ▶ Kelley Paul – Kentucky
- ▶ Robert Powell – Florida
- ▶ Kaira Rouda – California
- ▶ Amanda Soto – Florida
- ▶ Rep. Roger Williams – Texas



## THANK YOU FOR TAKING ACTION: OP-ED OUTREACH

Each month, the Congressional Families Program offers members and spouses the opportunity to submit op-eds about cancer prevention and early detection to their local media outlets. Op-eds can be personalized and tailored for local use.

Thank you to the following spouses who have recently requested state-specific information to personalize their op-eds and share vital cancer prevention and early detection messages in their home communities:

- ▶ Amanda Banks – Indiana
- ▶ Vera Davis – Illinois
- ▶ Leah Dunn – Florida
- ▶ Patti Garamendi – California
- ▶ Lorena Gonzalez – Texas
- ▶ Mary Himes – Connecticut
- ▶ Mikey Hoeven – North Dakota
- ▶ LeeAnn Johnson – Ohio
- ▶ Wayne Kye – New York
- ▶ Laina Marshall – Kansas
- ▶ Mary McKinley – West Virginia
- ▶ Kaira Rouda – California

Learn more about how you can help educate the public about cancer prevention and early detection at [www.congressionalfamilies.org](http://www.congressionalfamilies.org).

*L to R: Barbara Morris Lent, Monica Ruiz, Betty Ann Tanner, Mary McKinley, Annalise Glick, Lisa McGovern, Karmen Walker Brown, Abby Blunt*

## BIPARTISAN BRAINSTORM KICKS OFF THE YEAR

On January 29, a dynamic group of congressional spouses gathered for a

brainstorm session on Capitol Hill to share ideas to expand our efforts and educate more Americans about cancer prevention and early detection. With several executive council, ex-officio and new program members in attendance, it was a great opportunity to evaluate current, past and potential future initiatives.

Among the topics discussed were how we might work with local health departments to share resources; “post with a purpose” on social media to share health news, healthy eating tips and recipes; combine our efforts and work collaboratively on a nationwide initiative; strengthen the op-ed program; create a private Facebook group for Program participants; and develop a toolkit for hosting district events.

Attendees included: **Abby Blunt** (spouse of Sen. Roy Blunt of Missouri); **Karmen Walker Brown** (spouse of Rep. Anthony Brown of Maryland); **Mary McKinley** (spouse of Rep. David McKinley of West Virginia); **Annalise Glick Phillips** (spouse of Rep. Dean Phillips of Minnesota); **Monica Ruiz** (spouse of Rep. Raul Ruiz of California); **Barbara Morris Lent** (spouse of the late Rep. Norman Lent of New York); and **Betty Ann Tanner** (spouse of former Rep. John Tanner of Tennessee).

**Do you have ideas on how to strengthen and expand the Congressional Families Program? We’d love to hear from you!**  
Email [Lisa.McGovern@preventcancer.org](mailto:Lisa.McGovern@preventcancer.org).

## WELCOME NEW ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS!

We are excited to welcome nearly 20 new members to the Congressional Families Cancer Prevention Program® Advisory Committee! Members of the Advisory Committee are invited to participate as much or as little as time, interest and energy allow. Lending your name is of service in and of itself: it demonstrates that cancer prevention and early detection are important to you and that cancer knows no political, ethnic, gender, age or socioeconomic boundaries. From that starting point, you choose which, if any, activities you’d like to do. If you want to confirm you are listed on our advisory committee or would like to join the movement, please email us at [congressional.families@preventcancer.org](mailto:congressional.families@preventcancer.org).

**Anne Arrington** — Texas

**Roxanne Babin** — Texas

**Amanda Banks** — Indiana

**Gina Carbajal** — California

**Audrey Case** — Hawaii

**Evelyn China-Garcia** — Illinois

**Rosel Cloud** — Texas

**Deserai Crow** — Colorado

**Lacey Schwartz Delgado** — New York

**Alexa Gooden** — Texas

**Bart Houlahan** — Pennsylvania

**Kennisandra Jeffries** — New York

**Robert Powell** — Florida

**Christine Riggelman** — Virginia

**Kaira Rouda** — California

**Monica Ruiz** — California

**Jodi Stauber** — Minnesota

**Gayle Wicker** — Mississippi

## CONGRESSIONAL FAMILIES PROGRAM MISSION AND HISTORY

The Congressional Families Cancer Prevention Program® is a bipartisan effort, founded in 1991, to increase the public's understanding of cancer prevention and early detection. Families of Senate, House, Cabinet, Supreme Court and the Diplomatic Corps are invited to work within their respective constituencies to educate the public. The Congressional Families Program offers educational events, materials and resources, enabling its members to bring the message of cancer prevention and early detection back to their communities.

[www.congressionalfamilies.org](http://www.congressionalfamilies.org)



## CONGRESSIONAL FAMILIES CANCER PREVENTION PROGRAM®

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The Prevent Cancer Foundation® is one of the nation's leading voluntary health organizations and the only U.S. nonprofit focused solely on cancer prevention and early detection. Founded in 1985, it has elevated cancer prevention to prominence and fulfills its mission through research, education, outreach and advocacy across the country. Our public education programs have applied this scientific knowledge to inform the public about ways they can reduce their cancer risks.

[www.preventcancer.org](http://www.preventcancer.org)

Interested in forming a team for the Prevent Cancer Health Fair and 5k Walk/Run at Nationals Park?  
Email us at [congressional.families@preventcancer.org](mailto:congressional.families@preventcancer.org).



Do you know of a Member or spouse who might want more information about the Congressional Families Program? Contact Lisa McGovern at [lisa.mcgovern@preventcancer.org](mailto:lisa.mcgovern@preventcancer.org).