Cigna Combats Colorectal Cancer With Campaign Aimed at Two Million Individuals Due for Screening

BLOOMFIELD, Conn., March 18, 2013 - More than one million people in the U.S. are survivors of colorectal cancer, thanks to better prevention, early detection and treatment improvements, according to the American Cancer Society. Nevertheless, colorectal cancer remains the third leading cause of cancer-related deaths in the U.S., and is expected to kill 50,830 Americans in 2013.1

Cigna (NYSE:CI) has been working for the past eight years to turn the tide against colorectal cancer with its award-winning Colorectal Cancer Screening Program. The battle continues this year as the company rolls out an enhanced program in March that will reach two million people who are due for screening, through a combination of targeted online messages and direct mail. Cigna podcast on importance of colorectal cancer screening.

Approximately 300,000 newly eligible individuals covered by a Cigna medical plan who are 50 to 64 years of age, and whose claims data indicate they have not had a colorectal cancer screening, will receive information in the mail about appropriate colon cancer screening tests, including colonoscopy. In addition, they will be offered the opportunity to request the InSure® FIT™ screening kit, an easy and convenient at-home test that is sensitive at detecting abnormalities in the lower gastrointestinal tract. Cigna has made an arrangement with Quest Diagnostics (NYSE: DGX) to provide the test kit at no charge, and the laboratory processing fees are covered as a preventive benefit under most Cigna plans. Visit www.insuretest.com for more information about the test.

Eleven thousand Cigna customers who, based on Cigna claims data, completed either the at-home kit or a fecal occult blood test (FOBT) in the last three years and did not have a follow-up colonoscopy or sigmoidoscopy, have been selected to receive an InSure® FIT™ kit this year.

In addition, all Cigna customers who are age 50 to 64 will see a targeted message about colon cancer screening and the InSure® FIT™ kit whenever they logon to the company’s customer web portal, myCigna.com, between the last week of March and May 30. That means customers using the web portal for common online activities such as finding a doctor, refilling a prescription, taking a health assessment, checking on coverage or reviewing a claim will be exposed to this potentially life-saving message.

“Colorectal cancer is treatable and preventable, especially if it’s detected early, which is why educating customers about screening is so important,” said Scott Josephs, M.D., Cigna national medical officer. “While colonoscopy is the gold standard for colorectal cancer screening, many people may prefer the InSure® FIT™ screening test. It’s easy to complete, and it’s convenient because it can be taken at home. We urge all of our customers to discuss colorectal cancer screening with their physician to identify the most appropriate option. We’re pleased to see screening rates going up in response to our outreach program, and we hope they’ll go up even more this year due to the enhanced outreach. More people getting screened means more lives that potentially can be saved.”

Last March, Cigna's national colorectal cancer screening program reached nearly 542,000 customers. After six months, Cigna reviewed claims data, which showed that nearly 31,000 of the targeted individuals had a screening. That’s a screening rate of 5.7 percent, compared to 4.4 percent in 2010, which is statistically significant. (2011 rates were not used as a comparison due to different selection criteria.)

Cigna's claims data shows that colonoscopies had the higher screening rate, at 57 percent of all screenings last year, while the InSure® FIT™ and the FOBT accounted for 43 percent of all screenings.
Fifty percent of the colonoscopies had normal findings, while 48.8 percent detected polyps that were removed, and 1.2 percent resulted in a diagnosis of colon cancer. Detecting and removing polyps is important because polyps can become cancerous.

Since Cigna launched the Colorectal Cancer Screening Program, the company has partnered with clients to encourage their employees to get screened for colon cancer. For example, in 2012 Cigna worked with supermarket operator Harris Teeter to develop a co-branded, targeted campaign that included e-cards and a newsletter article. As a result of the campaign, Harris Teeter employees and beneficiaries had a screening rate of 20.6 percent, nearly four times the Cigna national average.

"Increasing completion rates for cancer screenings was one of our health promotion goals for 2012," said Terri Priore, vice president of Benefits and Administration for Harris Teeter. "These outstanding results show that working collaboratively with Cigna to develop health improvement messages and targeting them appropriately can affect an individual’s decision to get a potentially life-saving screening."

Cigna customers who receive program information by mail also receive guidance about what to do if they have specific colorectal cancer symptoms, such as a change in bowel habits, rectal bleeding or abdominal pain, which could require a complete evaluation by a physician. Confidential InSure® FIT™ results are mailed to individuals, who are encouraged to share positive or negative results with their primary care physician so that an appropriate follow-up screening plan may be developed.

**About Cigna**

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1 American Cancer Society website, Key Statistics About Colorectal Cancer.