

# I am a Colon Cancer Survivor.

**Like most people I avoided having a colonoscopy like the plague.**

Although Colon Cancer runs in my family, I never thought I would have it. My mother and brother both had it but my brother was fifteen years older than I am. I am the youngest in my family, so I thought my sisters (3 of them) would have Colon Cancer before I would. They all regularly had colonoscopies, so I thought as long as they were ok; I didn't have anything to worry about.

**In 2008 one of my sisters was due to have her regularly scheduled colonoscopy done and she wanted me to have one at the same time.**

I refused, telling her I would have one done in a couple of years. Well, she wouldn't take no for an answer and pressured me into having it done no matter how hard I protested. She probably saved my life--- at least she insists she did. Her test came back fine, but mine did not.

Dr. Smith found two polyps and was able to remove the smaller one. He said I would need surgery to remove the other one. On May 8, 2008, he removed ten inches of my colon. It was found to be Stage 1 Colon Cancer. It was contained in a walnut sized polyp, but the doctor said it was starting to eat through the wall.

**He said if I had waited a few more years to have my colonoscopy it probably would have spread. The outcome would have been a completely different story.** I didn't need any type of chemo or treatments, and I'm doing great. Every three months I have blood work done to make sure everything is okay, but that's no big deal. Having a colonoscopy saved my life, and it might save yours too.

Unfortunately, my mother's colon cancer went undetected before the use of colonoscopies was common. She had complained for months that

something was wrong with her bowel movements, but her primary care physician didn't seem concerned... after all, she was 80 years old. By the time the cancer was found, it had spread. She had a lot of complications from two surgeries and eventually had a stroke, diabetes and a host of other problems. She spent the last four years of her life in a nursing home and died in agony.

**It's too late for my mother and my brother, but it's not too late for you!**

**Ann**