

Catie Kouric: Turning to health news now. Doctors agree that screening⁽¹⁾ for colon cancer saves lives. It's the second leading cause of cancer deaths, killing nearly 50,000 people every year. But while colonoscopies can catch ...the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) says they may miss other potentially dangerous abnormalities. Dr Jon LaPook has more in tonight's Eye on your Health.

Dr Jon LaPook: A new study shows that the most dangerous colon polyps, flat ones, are the hardest to find and more common than doctors thought.

Dr Roy Soetikno: The difference between the growth and the normal is just a slight colour difference. The growth tends to be slightly more red.

LaPook: Colonoscopies save lives by removing polyps before they turn cancerous. Most polyps are mushroom-like, relatively easy to find and benign. But today's study found flat, barely⁽²⁾ raised or depressed polyps are not only easy to miss but nearly 10 times more likely to be cancerous.

Dr Tonya Kaltenbach: I think that the message for doctors is to understand the shape of these lesions in order for them to recognize them during colonoscopy and to understand the importance of their cancerous potential.

LaPook: A clean colon makes it much easier to pick up subtle⁽³⁾, flat polyps. Just this morning I found this barely raised growth in a 41-year-old woman. So easy to miss if she hadn't done such a good job with the prep.

Dr Kaltenbach: The laxative bowel preparation cleanses⁽⁴⁾ the bowel, removes the stool, so that the doctors can have the best chance to look for these subtle polyps.

LaPook: Studies suggest that doctors do find the majority of polyps. Today's news should help them find even more.

Couric: And Jon what is the bottom line⁽⁵⁾ so to speak for doctors and patients?

LaPook: Doctors need to go slowly and they need to know the importance of these flat lesions. For patients they shouldn't be intimidated, ask your doctor, did you see this article?

Couric: And take your time, by the way, while you're performing a colonoscopy. Meanwhile, this is a chance to encourage people to get screened because only 50% of those 50 or over really do get screened.

LaPook: It's so important not only as colon cancer's preventable but if it's found early, it's 90% curable. So people should get screened starting at 50 or even earlier if they have a family history of any symptoms and for those people out there who can't just handle⁽⁶⁾ a colonoscopy, my answer is it sure beats chemo⁽⁷⁾.

Couric: Jon LaPook, thanks Jon.
CBSnews.

Lexical helpline:

1. **screening:** test for a disease done routinely
2. **barely:** to a very limited extent
3. **subtle:** not obvious
4. **cleanse(v):** clean thoroughly, meticulously
5. **bottom line:** a factor that cannot be avoided
6. **handle(v):** deal with, cope with
7. **chemo:** chemotherapy