

# Quarterly Roundup

Quarter 1 2019 | VOL. 1

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## We Relocated!

The team is in a new office this quarter. Check out the details on page 2.

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## Change in Recommended Age for Colonoscopies

Did you know that the recommended age of a colonoscopy has changed? Find out the new recommended age on page 3.

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## Where Did the Stolen Colon Go?

The #StolenColon was found! See where it was found and more details on page 3.

## Announcing Our Quarterly Newsletter

The ColonoscopyAssist program will now be rounding out the end of every quarter with a newsletter featuring insights from our program and noteworthy stories in gastroenterology and colon cancer news.

Thanks to the providers that participate with the ColonoscopyAssist program, patients across the country are able to access more affordable colon cancer screenings that they otherwise would not receive. This newsletter highlights the impact of provider participation on patients that utilize our program to get screened.



## Our Office Has Relocated

The final quarter of 2018 was an exciting one at ColonoscopyAssist. As of October 2018, ColonoscopyAssist has relocated to our new office at 2100 Valley View Ln, Suite #490, Farmers Branch, TX 75234. Although our address has changed, its business as usual and our phone numbers and hours of operation have remained the same.

The team is thrilled to be in the newer and larger office space which will allow to add more members to our team to expand the program. Growing our team in the new office will allow us to expand the program to more communities nationwide. We are excited to see what communities ColonoscopyAssist will expand into next!



The ColonoscopyAssist team in our new office

## Our Team is Growing

Since moving into our new office, we have already added two new members onto the ColonoscopyAssist program. Chelsea Moran and Morgan Adams. Chelsea will serve as our outreach and education coordinator and Morgan as an additional patient navigator to assist patients understand their screening options. As we grow in 2019, we hope to expand our team further to meet the volume of calls the program receives.

## Physicians Make Our Program Possible

This quarter we caught up with Venu Julapalli, M.D from Integral Gastroenterology in Houston, TX.

### When did you first decide to become a doctor? Why?

"If you're an Indian American of my generation, you were going to become a doctor or an engineer, with few exceptions. So I didn't really decide to become a doctor -- it was decided for me. But I'm glad it did, because no other profession allows you to get so quickly connected with the lives of everyday people.

### Tell us about your practice and your team.

"I'm located in the greater Houston area. I'm an independent physician, which means I serve no one but the patient. My practice is small, nimble, and intimate, which gives me more time to devote to my patients. And I've set up a "priceless pricing," pay-it-forward model in my clinic -- the first of its kind in the country. You can learn more about the model at [igcmed.com](http://igcmed.com)."

### Any words to our readers on the fence about getting screened?

"There are several different options on how to get screened for colorectal cancer, and a colonoscopy is one of them. We as physicians can help you decide what works best for you. Colon cancer is usually silent and without symptoms, and it is preventable and curable when caught early."

### How long have you participated in the ColonoscopyAssist program and what made you want to participate?

"I've partnered with ColonoscopyAssist since January 2017. I don't think it should cost thousands upon thousands of dollars for someone to get a colonoscopy, for those either without insurance. When I decided to practice outside of the insurance model myself, the partnership with ColonoscopyAssist was a no-brainer for me."

### Why did you choose to specialize in gastroenterology? And how long have you been practicing?

"I've been in private solo practice in gastroenterology for over thirteen years now. I love gastroenterology because it's a fascinating mix of different things: acute and chronic care, clinical visits with procedures, and a wide variety of overlapping systems, including the mind-gut connection."



Venu Julapalli, M.D.

*"I serve no one but the patient."*  
-Dr. Venu Julapalli

## When Should a Colonoscopy Be Recommended?

Recently, the recommended age for a colorectal cancer screening has been adjusted to a younger recommendation. The recommended age for the screening, suggested by the American Cancer Society (ACS), was previously 50, but has now been decreased to 45. A study published in 2017 in the Journal of the National Cancer Institute found that cancer rates for young adults and middle-aged adults had increased by roughly 1% yearly, while the cancer rate for adults aged 55 or older had decreased. With the significant increase in colorectal cancer among young adults, it was found that there would be a benefit in recommending patients to have the procedure done at an earlier age.

The guidelines for colorectal cancer screening recommended by the ACS were changed to reflect the benefit found from these studies. Previous studies have also shown that colorectal cancer screening in the recommended age, along with a 10-year follow-up, have successfully decreased the percentage of colorectal cancer diagnosis for people of average risk. Based on these recommendations, ColonoscopyAssist recently updated its outreach and education to include adults between 45yrs and 50yrs.

## The Stolen Colon Has Been Found

In October of last year, a 10-foot long inflatable colon owned by the Colon Cancer Coalition was stolen in Kansas City, MO. The massive colon has been used to raise awareness for colon cancer screening and to show the public how polyps form in the colon.

There was a silver lining to this situation, as awareness of the theft prompted the hashtag #StolenColon and became a social media sensation, bringing more attention to the importance of colon cancer screening and the Colon Cancer Coalition. On October 29, 2018, the Kansas City Police were able to locate the giant colon inside of an unoccupied house. The inflatable colon is now back to bringing awareness of colon cancer rates to people nationwide.



ColonoscopyAssist's booth at Digestive Disease Week stationed next to the inflatable colon.

## See What Patients Are Saying About Our Program



Michael Kelly

***“Thank you for listening to us.”***

**-Michael Kelly**

**Why was ColonoscopyAssist a good fit for you when getting screened?**

“I thought I had health insurance that covered simple wellness checks and it turned out that I didn’t. ColonoscopyAssist was affordable, professional and hassle free and really made sense in that situation.”

**What were the other options available to you other than ColonoscopyAssist and why did you ultimately choose the program?**

“The only other option was to have the procedure done at a private clinic at almost 4 or 5 times the cost which I could not do.”

**If the program did not exist, do you think things would be different for you?**

“Absolutely. The ridiculously high prices without the program are unfordable and not fair to consumers.”

**What was your experience with the providers?**

“Excellent. My appointment time was prompt, the office was clean and the staff was very friendly and knowledgeable.”

**Any words to physicians considering to participate in ColonoscopyAssist?**

“Yes! We the patients need a professional, licensed and safe alternative that we can afford. Thank you for listening to us and performing our colonoscopy through the program.”

**Any words to our readers that are on the fence about getting screened?**

“Get screened already! If polyps or cancer run in your family, get screened early because colon cancer is 100 percent curable if caught early. The test is painless and the results were immediate.”