

J08 Virtual GI Biopsy

February 2009

Intro: Colon cancer is a deadly disease that, thanks to screening tools, can be prevented and cured if caught early. One of the current ways to look for cancer or pre-cancerous polyps is with colonoscopy. That's the test during which doctors use a scope to spot and remove polyps which they send to a lab for diagnosis. But now, a new technology allows doctors to determine if you have pre-cancerous polyps without having to remove them first. Doctors at Mayo Clinic say it could save many people from having unnecessary biopsies.

Video

Audio

Total running time 1:30

AS A GIFT TO HIMSELF, JOHN LEVCHUK GOT A HEAD-TO-TOE PHYSICAL EXAM. IT INCLUDED A COLONOSCOPY.

CG :07 to :10

John Levchuk

Had colonoscopy

“THEY TOOK OUT ABOUT 20 DIFFERENT POLYPS.”

THE ONLY WAY JOHN'S DOCTORS COULD TELL WHETHER OR NOT THE COLON POLYPS WERE PRE-CANCEROUS WAS TO REMOVE THEM AND SEND THEM TO A PATHOLOGY LAB FOR DIAGNOSIS.

Standup

CG :18 to :25

Vivien Williams

POLYP BIOPSIES ARE A VERY

Reporting

GOOD WAY OF DIAGNOSING
CANCER, BUT STUDIES SHOW
ALMOST HALF OF THEM DON'T
NEED TO BE TAKEN OUT BECAUSE
THEY ARE BENIGN. RESEARCH AT
MAYO CLINIC SHOWS THAT A NEW
TECHNOLOGY CAN DETECT AND
DIAGNOSE COLON POLYPS
WITHOUT HAVING TO REMOVE ANY
TISSUE FROM THE BODY.

CG :34 to :46

Michael Wallace, M.D.

Mayo Clinic

“THIS NEW VIRTUAL BIOPSY
TECHNIQUE WOULD ALLOW US TO
LOOK AT POLYPS VERY PRECISELY
WHILE THEY'RE STILL IN THE
COLON AND MAKE A DIAGNOSIS AS
TO WHETHER THEY ARE
PRECANCEROUS OR NOT.”

HERE'S HOW IT WORKS: DOCTOR
MICHAEL WALLACE GUIDES A
COLONOSCOPE EQUIPPED WITH A
CAMERA AND TINY, PROBE-BASED
MICROSCOPE INTO THE COLON.
ONCE THERE HE CAN IDENTIFY

POLYPS AND USE THE
MICROSCOPE TO LOOK AT
INDIVIDUAL CELLS. IF THE CELLS
LOOK NORMAL, THE POLYP CAN
STAY. IF IT DOES HAVE
PRECANCEROUS CHANGES, HE
CAN TAKE IT OUT AND PREVENT IT
FROM DEVELOPING INTO CANCER.
“THIS SAMPLE IS ALMOST
CERTAINLY A CANCER NOT JUST
PRECANCEROUS.”
DR. WALLACE SAYS THE
TECHNOLOGY MAY ELIMINATE THE
NEED FOR UNNECESSARY
BIOPSIES AND BENIGN POLYP
REMOVAL. AND THAT’S GOOD
NEWS FOR THE THOUSANDS OF
PEOPLE LIKE JOHN WHO GET
SCREENED FOR COLON CANCER
EVERY FEW YEARS. FOR MEDICAL
EDGE, I’M VIVIEN WILLIAMS.

Anchor tag:

Another potential advantage that Dr. Wallace is studying now is cost saving that could arise from not having to perform so many biopsies.

John says he knows colon cancer screening saves lives. And he hopes this technology will encourage more people to have the procedure.

This technology is being considered for use for other types of cancer screening as well. For more information, visit our Website at...**[STATIONS: Per the licensing agreement, please provide a link from your station's website to <http://www.mayoclinic.org> or voice tag "mayoclinic.org" for more information.]**