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Medtronic and Katie Couric at SXSW: Spotlighting colon cancer myths and AI's tangible progress in cancer detection

Katie will join colorectal cancer screening advocates and Medtronic leaders in a panel conversation, highlighting new data that reveals a stark gap in colorectal cancer awareness, as well as how AI is making the deadly disease more detectable, preventable

This Colon Cancer Awareness Month, Katie Couric and [Medtronic](#) (NYSE:MDT) will shed light on pervasive myths surrounding colorectal cancer, particularly among women. Despite cultural presumptions, women and men are at nearly equal risk of developing colorectal cancer: 1 in 25 women and 1 in 23 men. However, new survey data from Medtronic shows an alarming misperception around this risk, with **1 in 3 women believing colorectal cancer impacts men more than women.**¹

Nearly half of those women believe the risk is *2-3 times higher* in men - a false impression that's stronger among younger women. In particular, 43% of Gen Z and Millennials believe colon cancer is a men's disease, which is concurrent to existing data showing [colorectal cancer numbers are rising in adults under 50](#). This misperception is linked to a stark **gap in screening compliance among women**, as less than half (44%) of Gen X women who are of age to be screened have had a colonoscopy, though almost twice as many women in the same age group (80%) have had a mammogram.

"These survey findings reveal a startling reality about the level of awareness of colon cancer risk among women," said Dr. Laura Mauri, Medtronic SVP and Chief Scientific, Medical and Regulatory Officer. "While the significance of breast cancer prevention has - thankfully - been widely embraced, the importance of colorectal cancer prevention remains overlooked. This is despite colon cancer being the [second leading cause of cancer death in women under 55](#), just behind breast cancer."

To address this critical knowledge gap, Katie Couric will host a panel at South by Southwest (SXSW), tackling the vital need for colorectal cancer screening. Through her unique perspective as a cancer survivor, patient caregiver, and early cancer screening advocate, Katie will spotlight the advantages of cutting-edge screening technologies. The session will focus on how AI is transforming cancer detection and treatment, specifically, as well as demonstrating innovations that enhance the critical work of medical professionals in fighting the disease.

“As members of the healthcare community, we have a duty that goes beyond patient education,” said Dr. Mauri. “We must actively empower individuals to reach their healthiest selves, and the emergence of innovative prevention methods - including AI-assisted screening tools like [GI Genius](#) - equips us to meet these challenges with unprecedented efficiency and accuracy.”

Panel:

- **Title:** Health, High-Tech, and Hope: Turning the Tide Against Cancer with AI
- **Date:** Sunday, March 10, 2024, 2:30 - 3:15 PM CT
- **Location:** SHE Media Co-lab at YTX Yoga, 206 4th Street, Austin, TX.
- **Registration:** Open to the public; no SXSW badge required. Pre-register [here](#).
- **Panelists:**
 - Katie Couric, Award-Winning Journalist, Author, and Co-founder, Katie Couric Media - *moderator*
 - Ken Washington, Chief Technology and Innovation Officer, Medtronic
 - Dr. Austin Chiang, MPH, FASGE, Chief Medical Officer of Endoscopy, Medtronic and social media healthcare influencer
 - Dr. Raj Keswani, Associate Professor of Medicine, Gastroenterology and Hepatology, Northwestern Feinberg School of Medicine and AI colonoscopy screening advocate
 - Brooks Bell, colorectal cancer survivor and screening advocate who was diagnosed with the disease at age 38

In the U.S., colorectal cancer is the second most common cause of all cancer-related deaths for men and women combined. However, when precancerous conditions are identified early by administering physicians, colorectal cancer can have a five-year survival rate of over 90%.

The [Medtronic GI Genius™](#) system demonstrates AI's capacity to significantly improve diagnostic accuracy by serving as a second set of eyes for clinicians, demonstrating [100% sensitivity rate](#) when screening for polyp detection. Medtronic's advanced detection system empowers physicians to detect colorectal polyps more efficiently, generating improved outcomes for patients and showing what's possible when incorporating AI innovation in healthcare.

About Medtronic

Bold thinking. Bolder actions. We are Medtronic. Medtronic plc, headquartered in Dublin, Ireland, is the leading global healthcare technology company that boldly attacks the most challenging health problems facing humanity by searching out and finding solutions. Our Mission – to alleviate pain, restore health, and extend life – unites a global team of 95,000+ passionate people across 150 countries. Our technologies and therapies treat 70 health conditions and include cardiac devices, surgical robotics, insulin pumps, surgical tools, patient monitoring systems, and more. Powered by our diverse knowledge, insatiable curiosity, and desire to help all those who need it, we deliver innovative technologies that transform the lives of two people every second, every hour, every day. Expect more from us as we empower insight-driven care, experiences that put people first, and better outcomes for our world. In everything we do, we are engineering the extraordinary. For more information on Medtronic (NYSE:MDT), visit www.Medtronic.com and follow Medtronic on [LinkedIn](#).

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¹ The national survey was conducted in February 2024 with 1,000 adult women spanning ages 18 to 65.

<https://news.medtronic.com/Medtronic-and-Katie-Couric-at-SXSW-Spotlighting-colon-cancer-myths-and-ALS-tangible-progress-in-cancer-detection>