



2024 Colorectal Cancer Education and Outreach Resource Guide

The Cancer Screening Programs Unit at the Maryland Department of Health has updated the Colorectal Cancer Education and Outreach Resource Guide. Programs can use this guide to aid in the development of colorectal cancer awareness education and outreach materials.

This guide provides outreach and education information and materials from reputable sources, including the American Cancer Society, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Cancer Institute, and the George Washington University Cancer Institute. Resources include ready-made videos; factsheets with colorectal cancer facts; and information to help you create, update and tailor health education materials to the communities you serve.

To access the links presented in this guide, please press “Ctrl” on your computer keyboard and left click on the mouse at the same time, or copy the link and paste it onto your internet browser.

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What Is Colorectal Cancer?

Colorectal cancer is a type of cancer that arises in the colon or rectum. The colon and rectum are parts of the large intestine.

Sometimes abnormal growths, called polyps, form in the colon or rectum. Over time, some of these polyps may become cancer.

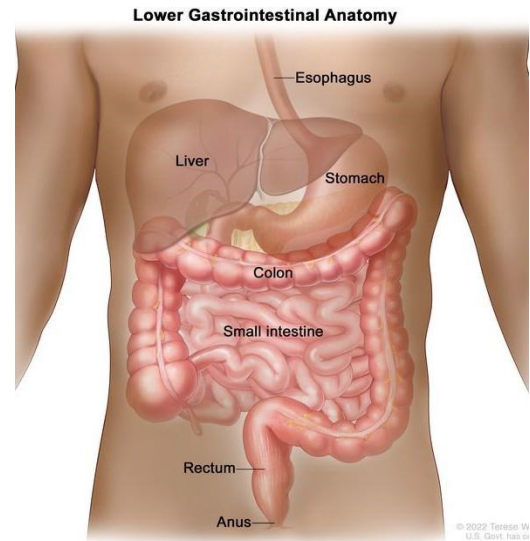


Image from: <https://www.cancer.gov/types/colorectal/patient/colorectal-screening-pdq>

What Are The Signs And Symptoms Of Colorectal Cancer?

Colorectal cancer does not always cause symptoms, especially at the early stage of the cancer. Someone could have polyps and/or colorectal cancer and not know it.

Here are some common signs and symptoms of colorectal cancer:

- A change in bowel habits
- Blood in or on your stool [when you wipe]
- Diarrhea, constipation, or feeling that the bowel does not empty all the way
- Abdominal pain, aches, or cramps that don't go away
- Unexplained weight loss



These signs or symptoms may also be caused by something other than cancer, so please see your healthcare provider if you have any of these signs or symptoms.

References

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2023, February 23). *What is Colorectal Cancer?* https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/colorectal/basic_info/what-is-colorectal-cancer.htm.
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2023, February 23). *What are Symptoms of Colorectal Cancer?* https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/colorectal/basic_info/symptoms.htm.

What Are The Risk Factors For Colorectal Cancer?

There are some risk factors that could increase a person's chances of getting colorectal cancer. Some risk factors can be changed, and others cannot be changed. Having a risk factor, or even several, does not mean that you will get colorectal cancer. Some people will get colorectal cancer even without having any known risk factors.



Colorectal cancer risk factors that CANNOT be changed

- ◆ Getting older
- ◆ Having inflammatory bowel disease
- ◆ Having a personal or family history of colorectal cancer or colorectal polyps
- ◆ Having a genetic syndrome such as familial adenomatous polyposis (FAP) or hereditary non-polyposis colorectal cancer (Lynch syndrome)

Colorectal cancer risk factors that CAN be changed *

- ◆ Lack of regular physical activity
- ◆ A diet low in fruit and vegetables
- ◆ A low-fiber and high-fat diet, or a diet high in processed meats
- ◆ Overweight and obesity
- ◆ Alcohol consumption
- ◆ Tobacco use

*** These risk factors are also known as potentially modifiable risk factors.**

According to the American Cancer Society, 55% of colorectal cancers in the U.S. are attributable to potentially modifiable risk factors.

References

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2023, February 23). *What Are the Risk Factors for Colorectal Cancer?* https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/colorectal/basic_info/risk_factors.htm.
2. American Cancer Society. (2024, January). *Cancer Facts & Figures 2024*. <https://www.cancer.org/content/dam/cancer-org/research/cancer-facts-and-statistics/annual-cancer-facts-and-figures/2024/2024-cancer-facts-and-figures-acf.pdf>.

Can Colorectal Cancer Be Prevented?

Colorectal cancer almost always develops from abnormal growths (precancerous polyps) in the colon or rectum and is a preventable cancer. **If the abnormal growth is removed early then it does not have a chance to develop into cancer. That's why screening for colorectal cancer is important.**



How a Colon Polyp Progresses to Cancer

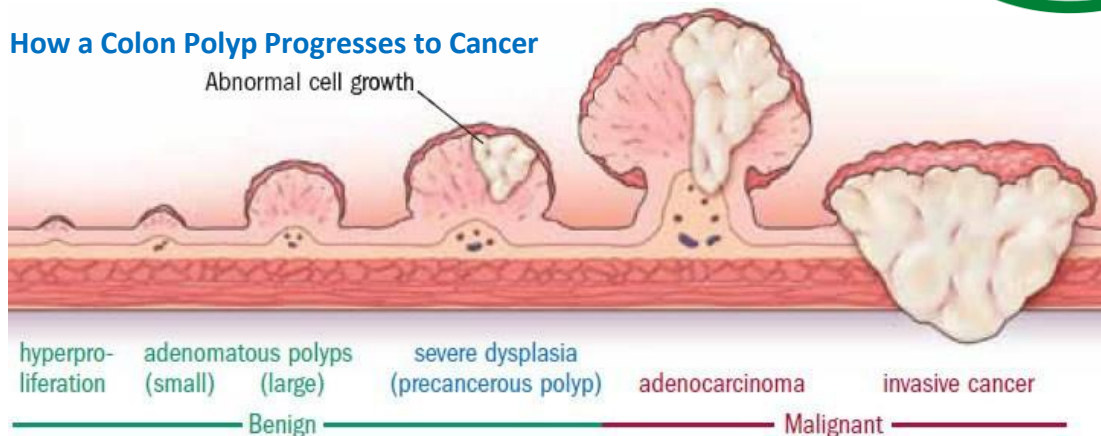


Image from: <https://www.health.harvard.edu/diseases-and-conditions/they-found-colon-polyps-now-what>

What Is Colorectal Cancer Screening?

Colorectal cancer screening is the process of looking for cancer in people who have no symptoms. Screening can find polyps and colorectal cancer at its early stages, when treatment works best.

The common screening tests used for colorectal cancer are:

- Colonoscopy
- Stool testing

References

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2023, February 23). *Colorectal Cancer Screening Tests*. https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/colorectal/basic_info/screening/tests.htm.
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2023, February 23). *What Should I Know About Screening?* https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/colorectal/basic_info/screening/index.htm.

What Are The Colorectal Cancer Statistics In The United States?

- Colorectal cancer is the third most common cancer diagnosed in both men and women.¹
- According to NORC at the University of Chicago, 45% of diagnosed cases of colorectal cancer in the U.S. are detected by screening.³
 - The lifetime risk of developing colorectal cancer is about 1 in 23 for men, and 1 in 25 for women.¹
 - In 2024, an estimated 106,590 cases of colon cancer, and 46,220 cases of rectal cancer will be diagnosed in the United States; and a total of 53,0100 people will die from these cancers.^{1,2}
- Colorectal cancer is the third leading cause of cancer-related deaths in men, and fourth leading cause of cancer-related deaths in women. However, it is the second most common cause of cancer-related deaths in both men and women combined.¹
 - For men and women younger than 50, colorectal cancer was the fourth-leading cause of cancer-related deaths during the late-1990s; but colorectal cancer is now the first-leading cause cancer-related death in men younger than 50, and it is second in women younger than 50.^{1,2}
 - The 5-year relative survival rate for colorectal cancer is 64% overall but ranges from 91% for localized stage to 73% for regional-stage and 14% for distant stage disease. Only 1 in 3 new cases is localized at the time of diagnosis.² Thus, the earlier the cancer is detected the higher the survival rate.



References

1. American Cancer Society. (2024, January 17). *Key Statistics for Colorectal Cancer*. <https://www.cancer.org/cancer/colon-rectal-cancer/about/key-statistics.html>.

2. American Cancer Society. (2024, January). *Cancer Facts & Figures 2024*. <https://www.cancer.org/content/dam/cancer-org/research/cancer-facts-and-statistics/annual-cancer-facts-and-figures/2024/2024-cancer-facts-and-figures-acf.pdf>.

3. NORC at the University of Chicago. (2022). *Percent of Cancers Detected by Screening*. <https://cancerdetection.norc.org/>.

What Are The Maryland Colorectal Cancer Statistics?

- For Maryland men and women, colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer-related deaths (Lung cancer is the leading cause). Colorectal cancer accounts for about 9% of all cancer-related deaths in the state.¹
 - ◆ Among Maryland women, it is the third leading cause of cancer-related deaths (only preceded by lung and breast cancer).¹
 - ◆ Among Maryland men, it is also the third leading cause of cancer-related deaths (only preceded by lung and prostate cancer).¹
 - ◆ The American Cancer Society estimates that in 2024, 2,620 Marylanders will be diagnosed with colorectal cancer and 1,000 Marylanders will die from the disease.¹
- 76.6% of Maryland adults age 50 and older have had a colonoscopy in the past 10 years or blood stool test within the past year. (Maryland BRFSS, 2020)
- According to NORC at the University of Chicago, 47.2% of diagnosed cases of colorectal cancer in Maryland are detected by screening.²



References

1. American Cancer Society. (2024, January). *Cancer Facts & Figures 2024*. <https://www.cancer.org/content/dam/cancer-org/research/cancer-facts-and-statistics/annual-cancer-facts-and-figures/2024/2024-cancer-facts-and-figures-acf.pdf>.
2. NORC at the University of Chicago. (2023). *Percent of Cancers Detected by Screening*. <https://cancerdetection.norc.org/>.

Useful Websites

- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**

Colorectal Cancer Information: The CDC provides basic colorectal cancer information and useful facts for developing or updating your educational materials. Additionally, this link features resources to assist programs and providers such as interactive statistics tool.

⇒ <http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/colorectal/>

- **Colorectal Cancer Alliance**

Main Website: Learn more about the Colorectal Cancer Alliance and access a variety of creative resources and upcoming events to help promote Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month.

⇒ <http://www.ccalliance.org/>

Support Guide and Resources: The Colorectal Cancer Alliance developed numerous free materials to raise awareness for colorectal cancer. You can easily download these materials, which include colon cancer facts, a colonoscopy prep guide, a family tree worksheet and more.

⇒ <https://www.ccalliance.org/patient-family-support/resource-guides>

- **National Colorectal Roundtable (NCCRT)**

The NCCRT, established by the American Cancer Society and the CDC in 1997, brings together public, private and voluntary organizations as well as invited individuals to reduce colorectal cancer incidence and mortality in the U.S. through coordinated leadership, strategic planning, and advocacy. The ultimate goal of the NCCRT is to increase the use of proven colorectal cancer screening tests among the entire population for whom screening is appropriate.

Main Website: Learn more about the NCCRT and access its many resources including webinars, toolkits, guidebooks, and infographics.

⇒ <https://nccrt.org/>

- **American College of Gastroenterology (ACG)**

The ACG is a medical association for gastroenterologists. Its website provides many useful information on digestive disorders including colorectal cancer. Its webpages on colorectal cancer contain factsheets, infographics, flyers, videos, podcasts, and resources.

⇒ <https://gi.org/topics/colorectal-cancer/#tabs5>

- **American Cancer Society (ACS)**

The ACS is a reliable source for cancer information and statistics that can be used to develop educational materials for providers and the general public. The following resources provide direct access to key information about colorectal cancer.

Colorectal Cancer Information: This resource provides a basic overview of colorectal cancer and includes free and downloadable fact sheets that cover the following colorectal cancer topics:

- * Causes, risk factors and prevention
- * Early detection, diagnosis and staging
- * Treating colorectal cancer

⇒ <https://www.cancer.org/cancer/colon-rectal-cancer.html>

Cancer Facts & Figures: The ACS publishes the annual Cancer Facts & Figures Report, a resource containing current cancer statistics to help your educational materials are up-to-date on cancer statistics. This report also contains colorectal cancer statistics that include national and statewide data about new cases, incidence trends and mortality trends. The report also provides information on colorectal cancer symptoms, risk factors, early detection and treatment.

⇒ <https://www.cancer.org/research/cancer-facts-statistics/all-cancer-facts-figures/2024-cancer-facts-figures.html>

- **National Cancer Institute**

Main Website: The National Cancer Institute is a valuable resource for information about colorectal cancer to help educate patients, providers and the general public. This resource page also provides quick access links that cover on the following topics:

- * Colon cancer and rectal cancer treatment
- * Causes and prevention of colorectal cancer
- * Colorectal cancer screening facts
- * General resources for individuals and families coping with cancer

⇒ <http://www.cancer.gov/types/colorectal>

Factsheets

- ◆ **Colorectal Cancer Screening** (from CDC)
 - ⇒ <https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/colorectal/pdf/colorectal-cancer-screening-fact-sheet-508.pdf>
- ◆ **Colorectal Cancer Fact Sheet** (from ACS)
 - ⇒ <https://www.cancer.org/content/dam/cancer-org/cancer-control/en/booklets-flyers/colorectal-cancer-fact-sheet.pdf>
- ◆ **Colorectal Cancer: Catch It Early and Reduce Your Risk** (from ACS)
 - ⇒ <https://www.cancer.org/content/dam/cancer-org/online-documents/en/pdf/infographics/colorectal-cancer-catching-it-early-infographic-print.pdf>
- ◆ **Colorectal Cancer Screening Tests At-A-Glance** (from CDC)
 - ⇒ <https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/colorectal/pdf/colorectal-cancer-screening-tests-at-a-glance-508.pdf>
- ◆ **Colorectal Cancer Risk Factors and Symptoms** (from CDC)
 - ⇒ <https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/colorectal/pdf/colorectal-cancer-risk-factors-and-symptoms-508.pdf>

Brochures

- ◆ **Colorectal Cancer Screening Saves Lives** (from CDC)
 - ⇒ <https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/colorectal/pdf/colorectal-cancer-screening-brochure-508.pdf>
- ◆ **Colorectal Cancer Screening Brochure** (from Fight Colorectal cancer)
 - ⇒ https://fightcolorectalcancer.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/2022_Screening_Brochure_Digital.pdf
- ◆ **Colorectal Cancer: Screening 101** (in English, Arabic, Chinese, Spanish, French, Haitian Creole, Hmong, Korean, Oromo, Somali, and Vietnamese)
 - ⇒ <https://coloncancercoalition.org/get-educated/info-materials/> (Scroll down to 2/10 of the page.)

Graphics

- **Shareable Graphics**

- ◆ The CDC provides shareable graphics that you can copy and paste the code to embed these images on your website, social network profile, or blog. These include:
 - ◇ Videos
 - ◇ Printed Materials
 - ◇ Social Media Posts and Images⇒ <https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/colorectal/resources/graphics.htm>

- **Infographics**

- ◆ **You Can Prevent Colon Cancer Before It Starts** (from the Colon Cancer Prevention Project)
 - ⇒ <https://coloncancerpreventionproject.org/education-prevention/prevent-colon-cancer/>

Social Media

- **George Washington University Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month Social Media Toolkit**

This social media toolkit is a resource for those looking to implement effective Colorectal Cancer Awareness social media strategies. This toolkit provides step by step instructions on how to use social media, best practices in using Facebook and Twitter, ready-to-use Facebook posts and tweets and creative ideas on using social media as a tool to raise awareness on colorectal cancer prevention and screening.

- ⇒ <https://cancercontroltap.smhs.gwu.edu/news/health-awareness-campaigns>
(Scroll down on the page to find the March—Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month)

- **CDC's Social Media Posts and Images**

The CDC provides suggested social media posts and images for you to promote colorectal cancer screening.

- ⇒ <https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/colorectal/resources/social-media.htm>

Videos

- **Preventing Colon Cancer: What You Can Do** (from the Colorectal Cancer Alliance)
⇒ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CCFOs8kRE6o#action=share>
- **What is a Colonoscopy and How Do I Prepare for it?** (from You and Colonoscopy)
⇒ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VBraB8Oe9Fk&feature=youtu.be>

Additional Resources

- **Colorectal Cancer Printed Materials** (from the CDC) - Includes factsheets, booklet and brochures, posters, postcards, and print public service announcements.
⇒ <https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/colorectal/resources/print.htm>
- **Gateway to Health Communication** (from the CDC) - Per the CDC's webpage: This resource is "a one-stop shop for health communicators. Whether you work in public health at a federal level, a state or local level, or in the healthcare arena, we will ensure you have the best we have to offer. Subscribe to our listserv to receive new ideas shared by thought leaders."
⇒ <https://www.cdc.gov/healthcommunication/index.html>
- **Communications Tool: Strategies for Developing Culturally Driven Public Health Communications** (from Public Health Communications Collaborative) - This toolkit provides strategies and tools on how to effectively communicate with multicultural audiences. It is divided into three sections – messaging, visuals, and outreach.
⇒ <https://publichealthcollaborative.org/file/?id=12676>
- **Lead Time Messaging Guidebook: A Tool to Encourage On-Time Colorectal Cancer Screening** (from American Cancer Society National Colorectal Cancer Roundtable) - This toolkit provides 15 colorectal cancer-related messages targeting 20–44-year olds to encourage on-time colorectal cancer screening. These messages have been tested to have the greatest impact on getting the message across to 20-44-year olds.
 - ⇒ Printed Guidebook: <https://ncrt.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/2023-Lead-Time-Messaging-Guidebook-v15.pdf>
 - ⇒ Webinar on the Guidebook: <https://ncrt.org/resource/new-resource-webinar-lead-time-messaging-guidebook/>

Trainings

- **Motivational Interviewing and Cancer Screening** (from Patient Navigation & Community Health Worker Training)

In this course, you will learn to:

- Apply focusing skills when having conversations with clients with multiple needs
- Apply the elicit, provide, elicit motivational interviewing technique when providing specific cancer screening information to patients/clients
- Integrate the OARS techniques when working with patient/client populations who have many barriers to accessing preventive cancer screening
- Identify common barriers to preventive cancer screening to better understand how to communicate with patients/client/community about preventive cancer screening

⇒ <https://patientnavigatortraining.org/elearning/courses/motivational-interviewing-and-cancer-screening/>

- **Colorectal Cancer Screening: Applying Motivational Interviewing Skills** (from The Institute of Family Health)

This video provides an introductory priming on motivational interviewing and demonstrates how you can apply the skill for colorectal cancer screening.

⇒ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EyRegUHF_xw

- **Mailed FIT Online Course** (from National Association of Chronic Disease Directors)

In this course, you will learn how Mailed Fecal Immunochemical Tests (FIT) can increase your colorectal cancer screening rates. The Mailed FIT Online Course is a free, self-paced e-learning course for health systems, State Health Departments, health plans, and employer wellness programs.

⇒ <https://chronicdisease.org/nacdds-new-online-course-helps-increase-colorectal-cancer-screening-rates/>

Tips on Choosing Images – Culturally Driven Visuals

Source: Communications Tool: Strategies for Developing Culturally Driven Public Health Communications (from Public Health Communications Collaborative). Page 6. <https://publichealthcollaborative.org/file/?id=12676>.

CULTURALLY DRIVEN Visuals



Culturally driven visuals can further strengthen reach and resonance, and prioritize representation of your multicultural audiences. They can also greatly benefit people within your priority audience that have lower literacy, health literacy, and numeracy skills, and drive greater understanding of information to complement your messaging. Examples for visual materials may include videos, images/photographs, static or rich media content, print and outdoor/out-of-home advertisements. Key considerations for developing culturally driven visuals include:

- Choose visuals that portray positive and genuine representations of your multicultural audiences.
- Avoid images that appear too retouched or staged.
- Avoid charts or graphs that are overly complicated to understand.

Remember that visuals can't always speak for themselves. Choose visuals that support your main message and add clear headings, labels, and captions to emphasize the information or call to action.

Choose your images

In stock image libraries, there can be a notable lack of multicultural imagery. Selecting visuals that on the surface seem to be “diverse” and “inclusive” but are not truly representative of your target audience may be ineffective and potentially harmful. It is ideal to create your own original imagery/photography or footage/video that features your target audiences. Depending on factors such as time and budget, consider sourcing images from stock photo websites that prioritize multicultural imagery like Pexels or Nappy.co.

Tips on Choosing Images—Best Practices

Source: Communications Tool: Strategies for Developing Culturally Driven Public Health Communications (from Public Health Communications Collaborative). Page 7. <https://publichealthcollaborative.org/file/?id=12676>.

If it is not possible to develop your own imagery, use these best practices when researching and using images to enhance your communications.

✓ Do:	✗ Don't:
✓ Work with community members, leaders, and those that have experience serving your target audience to develop or validate images that are culturally accurate, appropriate, clear, and inclusive.	✗ Use traditional or cultural dress images unless the message is specific and appropriate to the customs, traditions, or cultural practices for your intended audience.
✓ Select images that depict positive, health-promoting behaviors.	✗ Include images that may depict unwanted or triggering behaviors.
✓ Use images that will help your target audience better identify with your message.	✗ Use images that could unintentionally imply that people are responsible for their own disparities in health outcomes.
✓ Make sure images are accessible to people with disabilities and people with limited English proficiency. Provide alternative (alt) text that clearly describes the image in English or additional languages. Make sure to follow Section 508 compliance.	✗ Design visuals or text fonts that are “busy”—too bright, small, or voluminous. Visuals that are overly complicated in design or content can detract from your main message.
✓ Consider the following characteristics when creating more diverse visual content: race and ethnicity; gender identity and gender expression; sexual orientation; body type; abilities; age; clothing; wealth indicators; concepts of family; and location.	✗ Use images that could perpetuate negative stereotypes, including inequities in status, stereotypes or caricatures.

Preferred Terms For Select Population Groups & Communities

Source: Centers for Disease Prevention and Control. https://www.cdc.gov/healthcommunication/Preferred_Terms.html

Try This...	Instead of This...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People who are underserved by [specific service/resource] • People who are underserved by mental health/behavioral health resources • People who are medically underserved • People who are uninsured/people who are underinsured/people who do not have health insurance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Underserved people/communities/the underserved • Hard-to-reach populations • The uninsured
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People with lower incomes • People/households with incomes below the federal poverty level • People with self-reported income in the lowest income bracket (if income brackets are defined) • People experiencing poverty (do not use “underserved” when meaning low SES) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poverty-stricken • The poor/poor people
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People with undocumented status • Mixed-status households • Immigrant, migrant • Asylum seeker; people who are seeking asylum • Refugee or refugee populations • Non-U.S.-born persons/foreign-born persons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Illegals • Illegal immigrants • Illegal aliens • Illegal migrants • Foreigners • The foreign-born
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People who are at increased/higher risk for [condition] • People who live/work in settings that put them at increased/higher risk of becoming infected or exposed to hazards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-risk people • High-risk population • Vulnerable population • Priority populations

Please note that not all cancer screening messages contained in this resource manual are consistent with the current Colorectal Cancer Minimal Elements. If you choose to use information from these web resources, we encourage you to carefully check materials for consistency with the current guidance provided by the Maryland Department of Health.

Please contact Cristina Ruiz-McCalla at cristina.ruiz-mccalla@maryland.gov if you have any questions.



Funded by the Maryland Cigarette Restitution Fund