WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A monoclonal antibody that specifically binds human progastrin (hPG), wherein said anti-hPG monoclonal antibody comprises V_H and V_L CDRs having sequences selected from one of the following groups of V_H and V_L CDR sequences:

    (i) V_H CDR 1.8 of SEQ ID NO:37, V_H CDR 2.8 of SEQ ID NO:41, V_H CDR 3.8 of SEQ ID NO:45, V_L CDR 1.8 of SEQ ID NO:49, V_L CDR 2.8 of SEQ ID NO:52, and V_L CDR 3.8 of SEQ ID NO:55; and

    (ii) V_H CDR 1.13 of SEQ ID NO:38, V_H CDR 2.13 of SEQ ID NO:42, V_H CDR 3.13 of SEQ ID NO:46, V_L CDR 1.13 of SEQ ID NO:50, V_L CDR 2.13 of SEQ ID NO:53 and V_L CDR 3.13 of SEQ ID NO:56.

2. The monoclonal antibody of claim 1 which comprises VH and VL chains having sequences selected from one of the following groups of VH and VL sequences:

    (i) hV_H 8a of SEQ ID NO:75 and hV_L 8a of SEQ ID NO:76;

    (ii) hV_H 8b of SEQ ID NO:77 and hV_L 8b of SEQ ID NO:78;

    (iii) hV_H 8c of SEQ ID NO:79 and hV_L 8c of SEQ ID NO:76;

    (iv) hV_H 13a of SEQ ID NO:80 and hV_L 13a of SEQ ID NO:81; and

    (v) hV_H 13b of SEQ ID NO:82 and hV_L 13b of SEQ ID NO:83.

3. A monoclonal antibody of any one of claims 1 or 2, which is humanized.
4. The monoclonal antibody of any one of claims 1-3 that binds to an epitope comprising an amino acid sequence corresponding to a sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs: 33, 34, 35, and 36.
5. The monoclonal antibody of any one of claims 1-4 which competes for binding hPG with a reference antibody selected from the group consisting of:

(a) the monoclonal antibodies obtainable from a hybridoma selected from the group consisting of: 1B4A11D11 as registered under no. I-4371, 1B6A11F2 as registered under no. I-4372, 1B11E4B11 as registered under no. I-4373, 2B4C8C8 as registered under no. I-4374 and 2B11E6G4 as registered under no. I-4375; or

(b) the monoclonal antibodies having sequences selected from one of the following groups:

(vi) V_H CDR 1.8 of SEQ ID NO:37, V_H CDR 2.8 of SEQ ID NO:41, V_H CDR 3.8 of SEQ ID NO:45, V_L CDR 1.8 of SEQ ID NO:49, V_L CDR 2.8 of SEQ ID NO:52, and V_L CDR 3.8 of SEQ ID NO:55; and

(vii) V_H CDR 1.13 of SEQ ID NO:38, V_H CDR 2.13 of SEQ ID NO:42, V_H CDR 3.13 of SEQ ID NO:46, V_L CDR 1.13 of SEQ ID NO:50, V_L CDR 2.13 of SEQ ID NO:53 and V_L CDR 3.13 of SEQ ID NO:56.

6. The monoclonal antibody of claim 1 which neutralizes hPG activity in an in vitro assay carried out with LS174T cells.
7. A composition comprising a monoclonal antibody according to any one of claims 1-6 in an effective amount and an excipient, carrier, and/or diluent.
8. The composition of claim 7 which is formulated for pharmaceutical use.
9. A polynucleotide encoding a variable light chain (V_L) for an anti-hPG monoclonal antibody according to any one of claims 1 or 2.
10. A polynucleotide encoding a variable heavy chain (V_H) for an anti-hPG monoclonal antibody according to any one of claims 1 or 2.
11. An expression vector comprising a polynucleotide according to claim 9 encoding a variable light chain (V_L) for an anti-hPG monoclonal antibody.
12. An expression vector comprising a polynucleotide according to claim 10 encoding a variable heavy chain (V_H) for an anti-hPG monoclonal antibody according to claim 1.

13. A host cell transformed with pairs of polynucleotides according to claims 9 and 10 suitable for expressing an anti-hPG monoclonal antibody.
14. A hybridoma capable of secreting an anti-hPG monoclonal antibody according to anyone of claims 1-6.
15. The hybridoma of claim 14, which is selected from the group consisting of: 1B4A11D11 as registered under no. I-4371, 1B6A11F2 as registered under no. I-4372, 1B11E4B11 as registered under no. I-4373, 2B4C8C8 as registered under no. I-4374 and 2B11E6G4 as registered under no. I-4375.
16. A method of obtaining an anti-hPG monoclonal antibody comprising:

    (i) culturing a hybridoma of claim 14 under suitable conditions and

    (ii) recovering the anti-hPG monoclonal antibody from the culture medium or the hybridoma cells.

17. Use of an anti-hPG monoclonal antibody of anyone of claims 1-6 for the manufacture of a medicament for treating the colorectal cancer.
18. Use of an anti-hPG monoclonal antibody of anyone of claims 1-6 for the manufacture of a medicament for inhibiting proliferation of colorectal tumor cells.
19. A kit useful for detecting hPG, comprising an N-terminal anti-hPG monoclonal antibody and an antibody that specifically binds a C-terminal region of hPG.
20. The kit of claim 19, wherein the antibody that specifically binds a C-terminal region of hPG is a polyclonal antibody.
21. A kit useful for detecting hPG, comprising a C-terminal anti-hPG monoclonal antibody according to claims 1-6 and an antibody that specifically binds an N-terminal region of hPG.
22. The kit of claim 21, wherein the antibody that specifically binds an N-terminal region of hPG is a polyclonal antibody.
23. A method of diagnosing colorectal cancer in a subject, comprising quantifying the amount of progastrin in a serum sample from the subject using at least one

monoclonal antibody according to any one of claims 1-6, wherein a quantity of progastrin in a range of about 20 to 400 pM is indicative of colorectal cancer.

24. A method of selecting a patient suitable for anti-hPG therapy, comprising quantifying the amount of progastrin in a serum sample from a patient with colorectal cancer, using at least one monoclonal antibody according to anyone of claims 1-6, wherein a quantity of progastrin in a range of about 20 to 400 pM is indicative of suitability for anti-hPG therapy.