

Assessment of Knowledge, Barriers, and Facilitators Cancer Screening in South Florida

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Background

Despite being one of the most common and deadliest cancers in the world, rates of screening colonoscopy for colorectal cancer (CRC) surveillance among eligible adults remains sub-optimal. Data from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) shows that 21.7 million eligible adults have never been screened for CRC. Also, 81% of adults of have never been screened are people aged 50 to 64 years old. Access to healthcare and poor financial resources are common issues hindering patients from undergoing screening colonoscopy. However, screening rates among insured patients remains sub-optimal as well despite inherently overcoming those aforementioned barriers. Our study will elucidate barriers to entry among insured patients, specifically those in South Florida, which is yet to be studied

Methods

A simple questionnaire was disseminated to clinic patients on day of visit which was completed on the same day.

Questionnaire

Colon Cancer Screening Questionnaire 

This questionnaire is designed to assess your knowledge of risk factors for the development of colon cancer and colon cancer screening recommendations. You should not feel obligated to know all of the answers to these questions. This is simply designed to inform us of the most influential factors leading to increased awareness of colon cancer risk factors and screening recommendations. **Colonoscopy refers to the insertion of a camera tube into the rectum to evaluate the colon for the presence of cancer.**

Part I: Demographic Information

AGE _____ GENDER _____ RACE _____ COUNTRY OF BIRTH _____ PRIMARY LANGUAGE _____
LEVEL OF EDUCATION: High school College Graduate school INCOME: <50k 50-100k >100,000
Personal history of colon cancer: YES or NO Family history of colon cancer: YES or NO

- Are you aware of any alternative screening exams besides colonoscopy: YES or NO
- Have you ever had colonoscopy? YES or NO
- If you've never had colonoscopy, please select why not from the options below (otherwise move to Part II)
 - Did not have insurance
 - It was never recommended to me by my doctor
 - It was recommended to me but I was afraid
 - It was recommended to me but I did not think that it is important
 - It was recommended to me but I did an alternative screening test

Part II: Health Literacy

Please answer following questions with "Always", "Often", "Sometimes", "Occasionally", or "Never"

- How often do you have someone help you read hospital materials? _____
- How often do you have problems learning about your medical condition because of difficulty understanding written information? _____
- How often do you have a problem understanding what is told to you about your medical condition? _____
- How confident are you filling out medical forms by yourself? _____

Part III: Assessment of Colon Cancer Awareness

- Which of the following statements about colon cancer screening is true? (circle one)
 - There is nothing you can do to decrease your risk of developing colon cancer
 - If your first (screening) colonoscopy reveals no abnormalities, then you are no longer at risk for developing colon cancer and do not have to complete another test.
 - A family history of colon cancer may put you at higher risk of developing colon cancer and you should have a screening test at an earlier age than the recommended average screening age
- What age is the average-risk person to begin screening for colon cancer? (circle one): 35 40 45 50 55

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- Besides family history, are you aware of any other risk factors for development of colon cancer: YES or NO
- Are you aware that African Americans are at increased risk of developing colon cancer? YES or NO
- Are you aware that the American Cancer Society recommends colonoscopy in every American? YES or NO
- Are you aware that colon cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in the world? YES or NO
- Knowing that colonoscopy is the absolute best test to undergo in order to evaluate for the presence of colorectal cancer, which of the following that would make you more willing to undergo colonoscopy for colon cancer screening? (Circle all that apply)
 - Having my doctor counsel me on the importance of screening for colorectal cancer
 - Having statistical information on the rate of colorectal cancer development among people of my specific background
 - Having a positive stool study result before I make my decision
 - Having a family member be diagnosed with colorectal cancer
 - Having a family member who died of colorectal cancer
- Which of the following which would make you less willing to undergo colonoscopy for the screening of colorectal cancer? (Circle all that apply)
 - Knowing the rare risks of perforation, bleeding or death associated with colonoscopy
 - Having to drink the bowel prep liquid to evacuate your bowels and being unable to eat the day before colonoscopy
 - Being sedated with anesthesia for the procedure
 - Fear that cancer will be diagnosed if you undergo colonoscopy
 - Having family members or friends who underwent colonoscopy and did not end up having colon cancer

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Results

We evaluated 104 patients with a mean age of 46.6 +/- 18 yo. 58.3% were female. 43.3% were older than 50 years. 43.9% were white. 46.1% were born in the US. 91.3% reported adequate health literacy with no significant difference among gender or age groups. 21.%, 52.2% and 26.7% completed highschool, college, and graduate education respectively. 44% qualify for a colonoscopy based on the following criteria: age >50yo or age >40yo plus family history. However only 56.5% of those with criteria had a colonoscopy. When citing reasons why, 11.9% reported no recommendation by physician, and 7.1% considered it unimportant. 30.1% knew that 50yo is the appropriate age to start screening. 20.4% reported being aware of alternative methods of screening. 59.1% were aware that the American Society recommends colonoscopy for every American. 28.3% were aware that colon cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in the world. 49% said having my doctor counsel me on the importance of screening for colorectal cancer would influence me to obtain screening colonoscopy.

Conclusion

There is a serious knowledge gap regarding colorectal cancer screening among patients. At least 19% of patients could possibly be influenced to obtain screening with simple physician counseling. Future directions include identifying patients to be counselled in our very own clinic and to assess their willingness to undergo screening colonoscopy after effective counselling as a quality improvement project.