

Screening

Screening for colon cancer

Objectives:

In this chapter, we probe issues introduced in Chapter 26, How to Use a Patient Management Recommendation: Clinical Practice Guidelines and Decision Analyses, focusing on those that are specific to screening (see Box 28.3-1). Specific objectives include:

1. Understand the material that is required to critically appraise recommendations about a screening strategy; in particular, reflect on the difference between diagnostic accuracy of a screening test and clinical impact of a screening strategy.
2. Critically appraise a recommendation about screening.
4. Learn to apply and communicate recommendations to individual patients.

Assignment:

1. Read the clinical scenario.
2. Read Chapter 28.3 of the User's Guides.
3. Critically appraise the underlying evidence.
4. Prepare for communicating a recommendation about screening to patients.

Clinical Scenario:

You are triaging requests for consultations from the Divisional Internal Medicine Outpatient Clinics. On one particular request, a clinic nurse has penciled: "Direct to the GI clinic?" You glimpse at the note and you are puzzled.

"Dear colleague, please provide your expert advice on best screening modality for colon cancer for a 54 years old gentleman with a positive family history for colon cancer (both the father, at age 58, and a older brother at age 56 were diagnosed with colon cancer). He has been tested with FOBT, which has resulted negative, but would like to perform a more sensitive test. Unfortunately, his younger brother recently suffered a bowel perforation as complication of a colonoscopy, and required a complicated surgery. He is still terrified and prefers to avoid a flexible sigmoidoscopy or colonoscopy. Would it be appropriate to study him with a CT scan?"

You had recently attended a grand round on prostate screening, and had been fascinated by the complexity of the approach. (Also, you are turning 50, and feel sympathetic with issues around cancer screening). You recall seeing an e-mail alert from McMaster PLUS broadcasting a journal club article on the topic.

You accept the request for consultation, and request that the patient be scheduled into your next clinic.

You recover the ACP JC article (1), and after reading it, you decide to download from JAMA the USPSTF recommendation on colon cancer screening (2), and the original evidence review (3). You also refer to Chapter 28.3 of the User's Guide.

Enclosed Materials:

1. Koretz RL. Guideline: The USPSTF recommends screening for colorectal cancer in adults 50 to 75 years of age. *Ann Intern Med* 2016; **165**: JC26.
2. Bibbins-Domingo K, Grossman DC, Curry SJ, Davidson KW, Epling JW, García FAR, Gillman MW, Harper DM, Kemper AR, Krist AH, Kurth AE, Landefeld CS, Mangione CM, Owens DK, Phillips WR, Phipps MG, Pignone MP, Siu AL. Screening for Colorectal Cancer. *JAMA* 2016; **315**: 2564.
3. Lin JS, Piper MA, Perdue LA, Rutter CM, Webber EM, O'Connor E, Smith N, Whitlock EP. Screening for Colorectal Cancer. *JAMA* 2016; **315**: 2576.
4. Guyatt G, Drummond R. *User's Guides to the Medical Literature: A Manual for Evidence Based Clinical Practice*, 3rd Edition (JAMA). New York, NY: The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc, 2015. 28.3 Recommendations About Screening.
5. Worksheet for evaluation of an article on Screening.