

Short Term Outcomes of Using Fecal Immunochemical Test for a Pilot Colorectal Cancer Screening Program. A Single Center Study on 3024 Consecutive Patients

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Abstract

Background: In Romania, colorectal cancer does not benefit yet from a national screening program. In order to decrease the harm and burden of colorectal cancer (CRC), opportunistic programs relying on endoscopy has been adopted by each centre according to its capacity. A colorectal cancer (CRC) screening programme based on faecal immunochemical test (FIT) was launched at Ponderas Academic Hospital (PAH) in 2019.

Aim: The present study analyses the outcomes after the first 1500 tests in the PAH-FIT-CRC Screening Program. We have also aimed to compare the efficiency of the FIT testing program with the screening colonoscopies performed in our Center, withing the same time interval (2019).

Methods: The test was recommended in asymptomatic patients over 45 years, and it was followed by a colonoscopy when the test results were positive. Furthermore, we performed a retrospective observational study gathering data from all the consecutive patients prospectively included in the respective databases of our hospital, comparing the efficacy of the two colorectal cancer screening methods (FIT versus colonoscopy).

Results: Between 01.01.2019 and 01.01.2020, 1524 screening colonoscopies were performed, and the resulting data were compared with those obtained in the FIT group (1500 FIT tests freely distributed). In the screening colonoscopy group, the polyp detection rate was 38.98% and 22 (1.44%) adenocarcinomas were identified. In the FIT group, the FIT uptake rate was 71% with a positivity rate of 21.7%. The colonoscopy compliance rate for positive FIT patients was 29.4%, with only 2 adenocarcinomas detected.

Conclusions: Following data analysis, the need for improvement of uptake rate and colonoscopy compliance rate was suggested, due to the lower acceptance of FIT tests and colonoscopies, especially among men. Moreover, special efforts should be made in order to improve quality indicators for screening colonoscopies (especially adenoma detection rate) with the purpose of decreasing interval CRC.

Key words: colorectal cancer screening, faecal immunochemical testing (FIT), colonoscopy, adenoma detection rate (ADR)