

Surveillance Colonoscopy after Appendicectomy in Patients over the Age of 40: Targeted Audit of Outcomes and Variability in Practice

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Abstract

Introduction: Recent evidence suggests the need to proceed with a surveillance colonoscopy in patients above the age of 40 years who undergo appendicectomy for acute appendicitis, given the higher risk of an underlying colonic tumor. After anecdotally observing a substantial variability in terms of adaptation of these recommendations by the on-call surgical teams, we performed a clinical audit regarding our relevant endoscopic follow-up compliance rates to identify areas for improvement of our practise.

Materials & Methods: We performed a retrospective review of the electronic records of all patients above 40 years who had appendicectomy for acute appendicitis within a 3-year period in our institution, assessing as primary outcome the actual performance of a follow-up colonoscopy and the detected endoscopic findings.

Results: Our results demonstrated that more than 80% of our patients did not have an endoscopic follow-up, as suggested by the current evidence. In addition, with respect to the subspecialisation of the parent surgical team, it seems that non-colorectal teams had lower compliance regarding the arrangement of endoscopic surveillance, when compared to specialist colorectal team.

Conclusions: Emergency surgical teams need to be further educated with respect to the current practise recommendations concerning the appropriate endoscopic follow-up after the performance of appendicectomy for acute appendicitis. Establishment of dedicated bundles of postoperative care, as well as clear relevant guidance from the gastrointestinal/emergency surgery societies would be of great value in this direction.

Keywords: appendicitis; cancer; colonoscopy; polyp