

# Virtual colonoscopy option could improve colorectal cancer screening rates, patient survey suggests

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Providing computed tomography colonography (CTC) -- otherwise known as virtual colonoscopy -- as an alternative to conventional colonoscopy could improve colorectal cancer (CRC) screening rates, according to a study in the November issue of the *American Journal of Roentgenology*.

CRC is the second leading cause of cancer in the U.S. "While colonoscopy is currently the preferred test for CRC [screening](#), the invasive and time-consuming characteristics of the test are often cited as reasons for noncompliance with screening," said Fouad J. Moawad, lead author of the study and physician at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Bethesda, MD.

The study, performed at the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, MD, included 250 consecutive average-risk patients undergoing CRC screening who completed a survey that assessed reasons for choosing CTC in lieu of [colonoscopy](#), compliance with CRC screening if CTC was not offered and which of the two tests they preferred.

"Had CTC not been an available option, 91 of the 250 patients would have foregone CRC screening. Among the 57 patients who had experienced both procedures, 95 percent preferred CTC," said Moawad. The most common reasons for undergoing CTC included convenience (33.6 percent), recommendation by referring provider (13.2 percent) and

perceived safety (10.8 percent).

"It is recognized that screening reduces CRC incidence and mortality. Despite this widely acknowledged benefit, patient adherence to screening guidelines remains suboptimal," said Moawad.

"Our findings show the importance of providing CTC as an alternative screening option for CRC at our institution, which may increase CRC adherence screening rates," he said.

**More information:** [www.ajronline.org/](http://www.ajronline.org/)

Provided by American College of Radiology

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