

Wide genetic testing for Lynch Syndrome cost effective

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Widespread genetic testing for Lynch Syndrome appears to be a cost-effective strategy for identifying those at risk for colorectal and endometrial cancer, according to a report in *Cancer Prevention Research*, a journal of the American Association for Cancer Research.

“[Genetic testing](#) was always assumed to be cost effective for those at high risk based on their family history, but this shows it would be cost effective in a wider population, similar to the cost effectiveness of mammography,” said Stephen Gruber, M.D., Ph.D., M.P.H., director for cancer prevention and control at the University of Michigan Comprehensive Cancer Center, and a lead researcher on the study.

Gruber and colleagues used a mathematical model developed by Archimedes Inc., which showed when risk, based on family history, was assessed starting at ages 25, 30 or 35, followed by genetic testing for those who had risk exceeding 5 percent, colorectal cancers could be reduced by 12.4 percent and endometrial cancers by 8.8 percent. The average cost effectiveness ratio, a measure of expenditure per life year gained by the new strategy would be \$26,000, a value favorably below the often-quoted benchmark of \$50,000.

The American Association for [Cancer Research](#) hosted a teleconference on these findings on Thursday, Nov. 18, 2010.

“This will affect a wide population by changing our thinking about risk for colon cancer. Young individuals will be able to have an assessment of

their personal and family history using a computerized model that can help guide their colon cancer risk management for decades, and make it possible to prevent significant numbers of colon and associated cancers, especially in young people, for a very reasonable cost. It is a huge step forward in terms of bringing the benefits of cancer genetics to the broader population using tests that have, in the past, been considered too expensive,” said Garber.

Provided by American Association for Cancer Research

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