

Nurses can perform colonoscopies as well as docs

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(HealthDay)—Colonoscopy quality and safety are comparable for nurse and physician endoscopy trainees, according to a study published in the March issue of *Clinical Gastroenterology and Hepatology*.

Renate Massl, M.D., from Erasmus Medical Center in Rotterdam, Netherlands, and colleagues examined the quality and safety of [colonoscopies](#) performed by seven [nurse](#) and eight physician (gastroenterology fellows) endoscopy trainees. Participants were trained in [gastrointestinal endoscopy](#), and then performed 135 consecutive colonoscopies (866 total by nurse trainees and 1,080 by physician trainees) under a gastroenterologist's supervision.

The researchers found that the quality and safety of endoscopies were similar for nurse and physician trainees. The overall rates of cecal

intubation were not significantly different for nurse and physician trainees (95 and 93 percent, respectively; $P = 0.38$), and mean withdrawal times were 10.4 and 9.8 minutes, respectively ($P = 0.44$). The rate of complications was 0.5 percent for each group, and adenoma detection was 27 percent in each group. As the number of colonoscopies performed increased, the rates of unassisted cecal intubation gradually increased in both groups. The personnel costs decreased from \$64.65 to \$54.58 with a strategy in which one gastroenterologist supervises three nurses.

"In a supervised setting, nurse endoscopists perform colonoscopies according to quality and safety standards that are comparable with those of physician endoscopists and can substantially reduce costs," the authors write.

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