

Advantages of FIT as CRC screening method discussed

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(HealthDay)—Fecal immunochemical testing (FIT) has advantages as a

colorectal cancer (CRC) screening method, and should be a component of a screening program, according to an Ideas and Opinions piece published online Oct. 25 in the *Annals of Internal Medicine*.

In light of recent findings questioning the effectiveness of colonoscopy, David S. Weinberg, M.D., from the Fox Chase Cancer Center in Philadelphia, and colleagues discussed CRC screening methods.

The researchers note that a U.S. Multi-Society Task Force recently released an examination of the evidence relating to use of FIT for CRC screening, emphasizing the advantages of FIT over guaiac-based fecal occult blood testing. Advantages include higher sensitivity while maintaining similar specificity; more consistent detection of advanced adenomas; and patient preference for FIT. Recent studies show that FIT-based screening yields a reduction in CRC incidence similar to that of colonoscopy when adherence to serial completion is high, and patients are more likely to choose FIT over colonoscopy; consequently, more cancers (but fewer advanced adenomas) could be detected with FIT screening. Practical concerns surround implementation of annual FIT screening; for example, a large-scale FIT screening would require efficient tracking mechanisms.

"For primary care and other clinicians who provide CRC screening services, this authoritative consensus statement offers strong evidence for FIT as an excellent alternative for CRC prevention," the authors write.

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