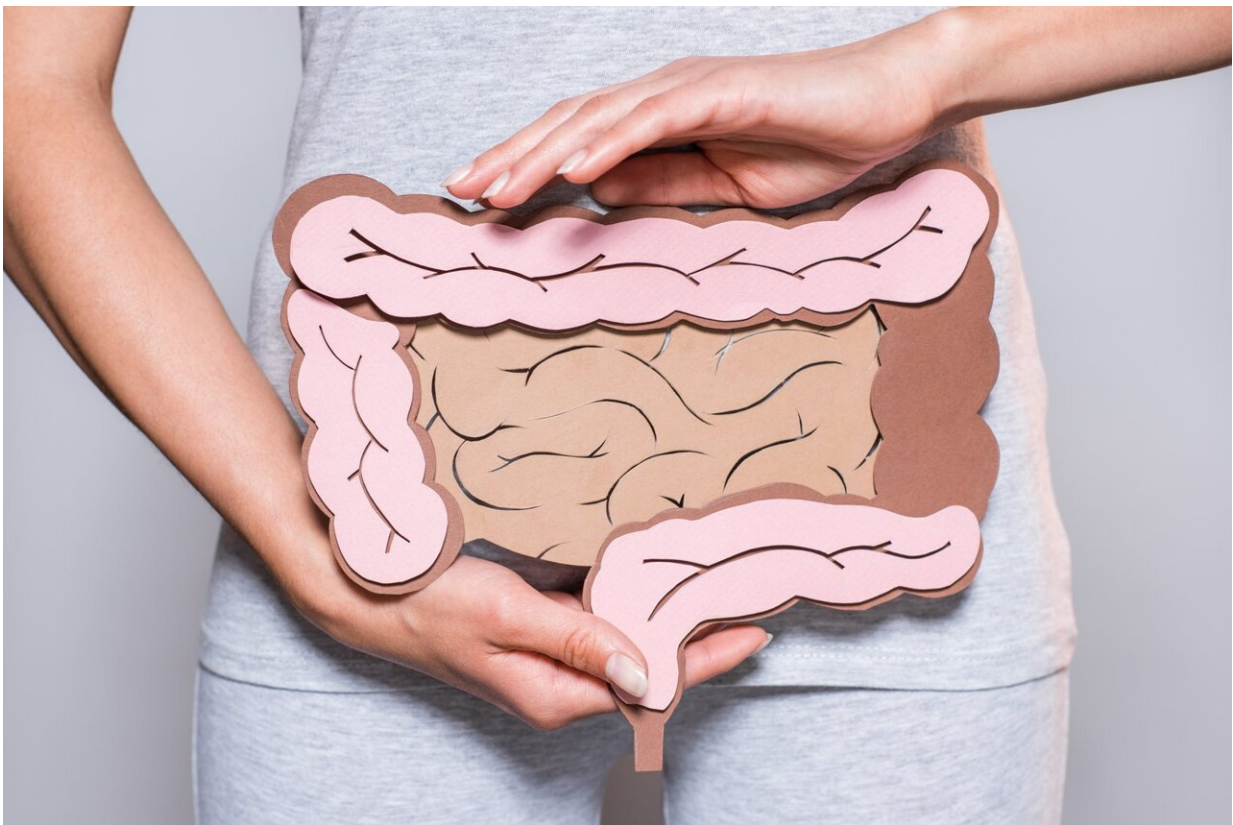


Research indicates lowering FIT positivity thresholds improves sensitivity, specificity comparable to mt-sRNA testing

June 5 2024, by Elana Gotkine



Lowering the fecal immunochemical test (FIT) positive threshold yields levels of sensitivity and specificity that are comparable to those reported

for multitarget stool RNA (mt-sRNA) testing without the additional testing, according to a research letter [published](#) June 1 in *JAMA*.

Tobias Niedermaier, Ph.D., from the German Cancer Research Center in Heidelberg, and colleagues examined whether lowering the FIT positivity [threshold](#) could achieve levels of [sensitivity](#) and specificity comparable to mt-sRNA testing, which incorporates a commercially available FIT, concentration of eight RNA transcripts, and participant-reported smoking status, without additional stool testing and smoking assessment.

The sensitivities of FIT for detecting [colorectal cancer](#) (CRC) or advanced adenoma and specificity for absence of advanced neoplasia were ascertained for FIT in the BLITZ study after lowering the positivity threshold to 8.8 µg/g, which yielded the same positivity rate as reported for the mt-sRNA test in the CRC-PREVENT study (17%). A total of 7,607 participants were included in the analyses.

The researchers found that lowering the FIT positivity threshold achieved similar sensitivities for CRC (94.9 versus 94.4%) and for advanced adenoma (44.7 versus 45.9%). Specificities were also similar (86.9 versus 85.5%).

"Future comparisons of novel stool-based screening tests with FITs should incorporate comparisons of sensitivities at the same positivity rate or specificity," the authors write.

More information: Tobias Niedermaier et al, Lowering Fecal Immunochemical Test Positivity Threshold vs Multitarget Stool RNA Testing for Colorectal Cancer Screening, *JAMA* (2024). [DOI: 10.1001/jama.2024.9289](#)

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