

# Implications from the post-polypectomy surveillance audit



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Over 95% of colorectal cancers arise in benign adenomatous polyps that grow slowly over many years before they turn cancerous. Polypectomy has been proven to be effective in reducing the incidence of colorectal cancer and colonoscopy is the method of choice for post-polypectomy surveillance. With the increased awareness and incidence of colorectal cancer in the general population, the demand in colonoscopy screening, including the post-polypectomy surveillance is expected to rise substantially in the near future. Therefore, there is a need to ensure proper usage of the colonoscopy service.

## Introduction

## Objective

To analyze the current practice of post-polypectomy surveillance among physicians, in order to design methods to improve the cost-effectiveness and to optimize the utilization of our limited resources.

This a retrospective study. Data was extracted from the clinical data and reporting system with the procedure of polypectomy in colonoscopy during the year 2004. The records of the patients were reviewed for the booking of follow up colonoscopy from 2004 to 2009.

## Methods

## Results

A total of 475 colonoscopies were performed during this period. Eighty-one (17%) patients have polyps identified and were removed. The mean patient age was 69 years (range 30 – 93 years) and the male-to-female ratio was 1.08 to 1. Anemia was the commonest indication for colonoscopy. Eight percent of the colonic polyps showed severe dysplasia. Twelve percent of the polyps had size of more than or equal to one centimeter. Forty-nine percent of the patients have more than one polyp. The ratio of sessile to pedunculated polyps was 1.5 to 1. Twenty-eight percent of the patients had advanced adenoma which was defined as polyp with size of more than or equal to one centimeter or histology showing villous or severe dysplasia. Seventy-five (89%) patients have followed up colonoscopy appropriately arranged according to the current recommendations. Three (5.4%) patients have colonoscopies arranged too early while another three patients have no follow up colonoscopy arranged.

A significant proportion (17%) of the colonoscopy examination revealed polyps and this is expected to rise in the future. Most important of all, a significant percentage (28%) of the polyps was advanced adenoma and required close surveillance. Although most of the follow up colonoscopies were arranged according to international guidelines and standard, there was still five percent of the colonoscopy that had been performed too early. Some physicians are not aware of the importance of surveillance and no follow up colonoscopy was arranged in five percent of the patients. There is a need to the establishment of guideline according to international recommendations in order to ensure the utilization of precious resources while providing the best and most efficient protection against the possibility of developing colon cancer.

## Conclusion