

## **The Difference In Awareness Of Colon Cancer Verses Prostate Cancer In An Urban Male Population**

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**Background:** Colorectal cancer is the 2<sup>nd</sup> leading cause of death. Early detection can cure colorectal cancer and prevent death. Only 1/3 of Medicare beneficiaries are taking advantage of screening colonoscopy.

**Aim:** To determine the factors which can improve the acceptance of colonoscopy as a screening method of colorectal cancer.

**Methods:** A standard questionnaire was prepared and distributed to inpatients and ambulatory patients age 40 and above. Questions were asked about education level, insurance, whether or not patient was aware of colon and prostate cancer, if screening tests (colonoscopy Vs PSA) were offered/done or not, and if not why? All data were compared.

**Results:** A total of 78 male patients completed the survey, of which 48.7% were Hispanic, 20.5% were African American, and 30.8% Caucasian. 50% of the patient completed high school or higher (43.6% Hispanic, 20.5% African American and 35.9% Caucasian). 16.7% had no insurance (76.9% HM, 7.75% AAM, and 15.4% CM). 71.8% (41.1% HM, 23.2% AAM and 35.7% CM) have heard of colon cancer as compared to 83.3% (41.5% HM, 23.1% AAM, and 35.4% CM) who have heard of prostate cancer. 62.8% people (36.7% HM, 24.5% AAM and 38.8% CM) has heard of colonoscopy as compared to 48.7% (31.6% HM, 23.7% AAM, 44.7% CM) who have heard of PSA as a screening test for colon and prostate cancer respectively. 38.5% people (36.7% HM, 23.3% AAM, and 40% CM) have had screening colonoscopy as compared to 56.4% (38.6% HM, 18.2% AAM, 43.2% CM) who have heard of screening PSA level. Of the 61.5% who have never had a screening colonoscopy, 45.8% were never offered the test, 37.5% responded that they don't have any problems, 6.3% were embarrassed, and 10.4% had no insurance. Of the 43.6% who never had screening PSA level, 55.9% were never offered the test, 20.6% responded that they don't have any problem, 11.8% had no insurance, and 11.8% don't want to know if they have cancer.

**Conclusion:** Although more patients are aware of colonoscopy than PSA, less patients underwent colonoscopy. The reason for this discrepancy could be embarrassment associated with the colonoscopy and not seeing colon cancer as a problem. Screening test NEVER offered is still the biggest problem, which can be improved by educating primary care physicians and patients.

