

Measuring the Level of Colorectal Cancer Awareness among Members of the Saudi Community

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Abstract

INTRODUCTION- Colorectal Cancer (CRC) ranked as the second most common cancer among Saudis in 2007; there were 907 CRC cases out of 9347 incidences of all cancer types among Saudis[1]. Screening for CRC proves to reduce the risk of developing CRC, and, as a result, CRC incidence[2]. The objective of the study is to measure the level of awareness of the Saudi community in regards to CRC. **METHODS-** This is a prospective survey-based study. Eleven-question surveys were conducted at Alfaisal University's CRC awareness booth during Aramco Summer Festival, 2011. The survey examined the booth visitors' background knowledge regarding CRC in five aspects: epidemiology in KSA, risk factors, symptoms, screening and prevention. **RESULTS-** Out of 451 visitors to Alfaisal University's CRC booth, 354 (79%) participants answered all survey questions. 93% of the participants were Saudi, and 72% were males. The mean age of those participants was 34.1 ± 11.2 years (ranged 18-72). On average, participants were able to answer 30% of all questions correctly. Although 71% of the participants answered that screening for CRC reduces the likelihood of developing CRC, only 14% of the participants correctly answered that one should start screening at the age of 50 years, whereas 48% reported that there is not – or that they did not know- a specific age for screening. Only 25% of the participants correctly answered that colonoscopy is the best method for screening, whereas 31% reported that there is no effective way- or that they do not know the best method- for screening. **CONCLUSION-** The results showed a low level of public knowledge and awareness in regards to the aspects of CRC investigated in this study. It is necessary to promote awareness about this prevalent disease among the Saudi community in attempt to reduce CRC incidence in Saudi Arabia.

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