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Colorectal cancer screening: A Saskatoon Experience

Colorectal cancer is the third most common cancer in the world. Despite advanced diagnostics and therapeutics, colon cancer related mortality remains high amongst the general population. The primary cause attributed to this statistic is the high morbidity and mortality of colorectal cancer observed as this is often discovered as an advanced disease [Stage IV] at initial presentation when they are symptomatic. Early colorectal cancer is often asymptomatic and clinically silent. Therefore in this context, several screening strategies have been implemented in the past in an attempt to detect early colorectal cancer. Such modalities include fecal occult blood testing, flexible sigmoidoscopy, colonoscopy and barium enemas. Several of these techniques showed a benefit to the screened population with reduction of overall mortality and morbidity. However, when these methods have been introduced as larger population based screening programs the acceptance rate has been poor in particular respect to colonoscopy and barium enemas. The Fecal immunohistochemical test based screening program for the detection of early colorectal cancer has been introduced in several countries including Canada. In Canada the Medicare health care system provides universal coverage through a joint budget of the provincial and federal governments: the overseeing of the screening program is the responsibility of the Provincial Government. This program has been introduced in the Province of Saskatchewan 5 years ago. This talk will discuss our collective experience of this screening program with an emphasis of techniques, results and patient education strategies for improved outcomes.

Biography

Selliah Kanthan is a Professor in the Division of General Surgery at the University of Saskatchewan. He is a general surgery consultant with a focused interest in colorectal surgery. He has published more than 75 peer reviewed manuscripts that are indexed in PubMed /Google scholar and serves as an editorial board member in various journals. He is an active clinician teacher and continues to participate and present at various national and international meetings with more than 100 conference abstract presentations to his credit.

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