

Shared Decision Making for Colorectal Cancer (CRC) Screening in Older Adults

Practice Cases Handout

Case: Mr. Martinez

- 78-year-old man moderately active; enjoys golfing and walks 1-2 miles several times a week
- Hypertension and high cholesterol; no diabetes or CHF
- Brother was treated surgically for colon cancer at age 60 and is doing well
- Past screening history (all high-quality colonoscopies):
 - 1st (age 56) colonoscopy normal
 - 2nd (age 67) colonoscopy removed a 5mm hyperplastic polyp; a 10 year follow up was advised

Questions:

Use the Clinician Tipsheet or the web calculators ([Lee-Schonberg](#) and [NCI](#)) to generate the following estimates:

1. What is his life expectancy?

- 5 years or less
- 6-10 years
- 11-15 years
- More than 15 years

2. What is his lifetime CRC mortality risk?

- <<1%
- 1%
- 5%
- 10%

3. What is a reasonable estimate of his CRC mortality risk with continued screening?

- << 1%
- 0.5%
- 2%
- 5%

For discussion/reflection: are these estimates higher, lower or about what you expected?

4. How would you bring up the topic with him?

5. *When you invite him to participate in the decision, he says he'll do whatever you recommend. How would you respond in a way that would foster shared decision making?*

6. *After you explore his goals and concerns, you learn that he is open to continuing screening, especially given his brother's experience, but he really doesn't like the colonoscopy prep. What would you recommend and why?*

Case: Ms. Clark

- 83-year-old woman with rheumatoid arthritis; here for annual wellness visit
- All 3 past colonoscopies were normal; no polyps; last one was at age 73
- Her mother was treated for colon cancer at age 90 and lived another 5 years after treatment
- She lives alone; uses a cane when going out of the house

Questions:

Use the Clinician Tipsheet or the web calculators ([Lee-Schonberg](#) and [NCI](#)) to generate the following estimates:

1. What is her life expectancy?
 - 3-5 years
 - 7-9 years
 - 10-13 years
 - 14 years or more
2. What is her lifetime CRC mortality risk?
 - <1%
 - 1%
 - 4%
 - 10%
3. What is a reasonable estimate of her CRC mortality risk with continued screening?
 - <<1%
 - 0.5%
 - 2%
 - 5%
4. What is the chance she will have a serious complication with colonoscopy?
5. At the visit, she asks you to schedule her next colonoscopy. How would you respond to her request?
6. What options would you present to her?
7. *She mentions that her mother's diagnosis is still weighing on her and she doesn't want to miss something that is treatable. She also mentions that she is concerned about the prep and doesn't want to burden her son to come help her. How would you help facilitate a shared decision?*