Bench to Bedside
Gastroenterology

Assuring that all eligible patients receive colon cancer screening is more important than determining the specific screening tool.

Treatment

- OTC laxatives, particularly MiraLAX (polyethylene glycol) are generally as safe and effective as brand name drugs.
- Cost of brand name drugs for constipation ranges from $4,700 to $38,000 yearly.
- Consider prophylactic Proton-Pump Inhibitors (PPI) therapy if aspirin is indicated at age 75 or older - NNT over five years to prevent major bleed with PPI if on aspirin = 23
- PPI’s can often be weaned in chronic GERD if done slowly to prevent rebound hyperacidity.

Screening and Testing

- Five year colonoscopy screening interval is indicated if first degree relative under the age of 60 had either colon cancer or an adenoma >10mm in size.
- Colon cancer incidence virtually identical to ages 75-79 with or without screening.
- Polyp number, size, and histology should determine polyp surveillance interval. Refer to the polyp algorithm for specific surveillance interval by polyp type.
- Colonoscopy not routinely indicated for constipation if CRC screening is up to date per AGA guidelines.
- Fecal DNA testing (Cologuard) may be more expensive than colonoscopy and has a significant false positive rate.

Considerations

- Esophagogastroduodenoscopy (EGD) is indicated for Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease (GERD) if failure of one month of BID PPI therapy.
- Red flag symptoms for early EGD are dysphagia, weight loss or iron deficiency.
- Barrett’s esophagus surveillance should be every 5 years in the absence of dysplasia.
- Prevalence of Nonalcoholic Fatty Liver Disease (NAFLD) is 30% of the population and accounts for 75% of chronic liver disease.
- Risk of Nonalcoholic Steatohepatitis (NASH) with NAFLD is 5% and risk of cirrhosis with NAFLD is 1-2%.
- Aggressive management of obesity and DM2 are the most effective approaches to treating NAFLD.
- Ultrasound for hepatic cancer surveillance in cirrhosis is as effective as CT or MRI.

Shared Decision Making

- Consider costs related to site of service and choice of sedation when ordering endoscopic procedures.

References: