

Utility of Routine Colonoscopy in Acute Diverticulitis

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Abstract : Purpose: Patients with acute diverticulitis (AD) have an increased risk of underlying colorectal cancer (CRC); however, those with uncomplicated AD may have the same underlying population risk. This study informs on an Australian AD population who were not routinely offered colonoscopic follow-up. Methods: A 2-year (July 2016 - June 2018) retrospective study of patients admitted with CT-confirmed acute diverticulitis was conducted. CT findings were categorised as 'complicated' and 'uncomplicated' and were correlated with the detection of cancer in subsequent colonoscopy or follow-up. Results: 67.7% (n=292) of 431 patients were seen to have had complicated AD on an abdominopelvic CT scan. Patients were complicated most commonly due to bowel wall thickening reported on CT (90.4%), perforation (20.2%), or an abscess (12%). Follow-up colonoscopic evaluation was conducted in 52.9% (n=228) of total cases of AD, out of which 156 suffered complicated AD and the rest uncomplicated. None of the uncomplicated AD patients in our cohort were found to have CRC. Of those with complicated AD, six were found to have CRC. Conclusion: The only CRC diagnoses were made in patients with complicated AD. Despite available evidence, a significant proportion of uncomplicated AD patients were still undergoing colonoscopy. There is scope to further safely decrease the number of colonoscopies performed in AD patients.

Keywords : acute diverticulitis, colonoscopy, colorectal cancer, advanced adenoma, complicated diverticulitis

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