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Use of colonoscopy as a primary screening test for colorectal cancer in average risk people.

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The use of colonoscopy as a primary screening test for colorectal cancer (CRC) in average risk adults is a subject of controversy. Our primary objective was to build a predictive model based on a few simple variables that could be used as a guide for identifying average risk adults more suitable for examination with colonoscopy as a primary screening test. The prevalence of advanced adenomas was assessed by primary screening colonoscopy in 2210 consecutive adults at least 40 yr old, without known risk factors for CRC. Age, gender, and clinical and biochemical data were compared among people without adenomas, those with nonadvanced adenomas, and those with any advanced neoplasm. A combined score to assess the risk of advanced adenomas was built with the variables selected by multiple logistic regression analysis. Neoplastic lesions were found in 617 subjects (27.9%), including 259 with at least one neoplasm that was 10 mm or larger, villous, or with moderate-to-severe dysplasia, and 11 with invasive cancers. Advanced lesions were more frequent among men, older people, and those with a higher body mass index (BMI). These three variables were independent predictors of advanced adenomas in multivariate analysis. A score combining age, sex, and BMI was developed as a guide for identifying individuals more suitable for screening colonoscopy. Age, gender, and BMI can be used to build a simple score to select those average risk adults who might be candidates for primary screening colonoscopy.