

Health Disparities in the Medi-Cal Population

Colorectal Cancer Screening



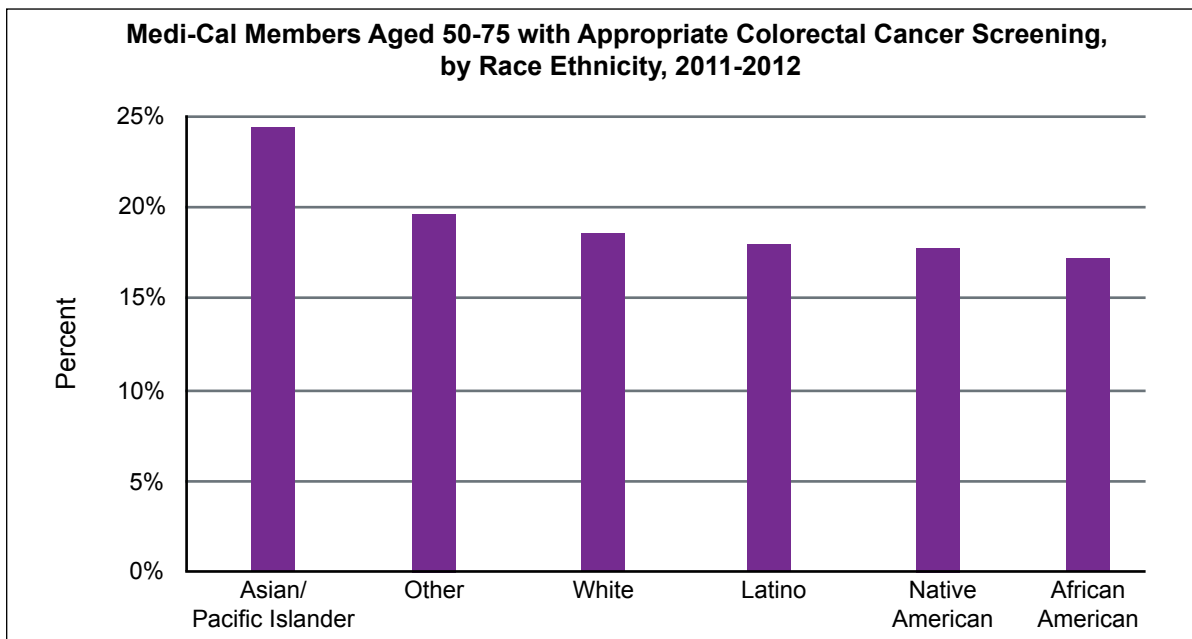
Colorectal cancer involves abnormal cell growth in the colon or rectum. Following lung cancer, colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in the United States. Risk factors include age, presence of polyps, personal/family history, diet, exercise, and smoking.¹

Colorectal cancer screening includes sigmoidoscopy, colonoscopy, and fecal occult blood testing to detect problems before symptoms emerge.² There is evidence that colorectal cancer screening saves lives.^{1,3} Given this evidence, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommends colorectal cancer screening for men and women aged 50 to 75.¹



Claims and encounter data from the Medi-Cal data warehouse were used to create a Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS) quality indicator to measure patients 50 to 75 years of age that received appropriate screening for colorectal cancer (see Figure). Screening rates were substantially higher for Asians/Pacific Islanders as compared to the other racial/ethnic categories.

Figure



Source: Medi-Cal MIS/DSS and Symmetry EBM Groupers, Version 8.0; July 1, 2011 - June 30, 2012.
Note: Members eligible for both Medicare and Medicaid were excluded.

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Colorectal (Colon) Cancer. http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/colorectal/basic_info/index.htm. Published February 26, 2013. Accessed February 2013.
2. Burt RW, Barthel JS, Dunn KB, et al. Colorectal cancer screening. *J Natl Compr Canc Netw*. 2010;8(1):8-61.
3. Pignone M, Saha S, Hoerger T, Mandelblatt J. Cost-effectiveness analyses of colorectal cancer screening: A systematic review for the US Preventive Services Task Force. *Annu Intern Med*. 2002;137(2):96-104.

Link to Data Sources and Methods