

[MUSIC PLAYING]

What community should be on the lookout for colorectal cancer?

I think in dealing with colorectal cancer, everybody needs to be worried and concerned about colorectal cancer. In looking at the different demographic breakdowns of colorectal cancer, we do know that African Americans, especially African American males are at a dramatically increased risk for colorectal cancer. Colorectal cancer mortality in African American males is 20% to 25% higher than in the Caucasian population.

The United States Preventive Task Force services have actually recommended this last October of decreasing the average age that one should start colorectal cancer screening in the African American population to age 45 from 50.

Other ethnic groups which tend to have a higher risk of colon cancer mortality are our Native American populace in the United States. And they, too, should probably start their colorectal cancer screening earlier at age 45.

Now, when we talk about earlier in regards to age, we're talking about patients that have no familial risk of colorectal cancer or have no history of any diseases, such as inflammatory bowel disease, which can put them at increased risk. We're talking about average patients with no risk factors.

And so when we look at average age when we start colorectal cancer, in the United States, 50 has been kind of the established norm for colorectal cancer screening. We have all been taking note in the mainstream media and you pick up the local newspaper, you'll see that younger people are becoming affected by colorectal cancer at numbers that we've never seen before. And this is pushing studies looking at to see what is going to be the optimal age to start screening, because, in my opinion, right now, starting colorectal cancer screening at age 50 is probably too late. We are, I think, moving now in the direction of going to 45 as kind of the start point for screening people for colorectal cancer with no other risk factors.

Now, if patients do have risk factors. If they do have a first degree relative, such as a parent or sibling with colorectal cancer, that is a different entity in itself in regards to when we start screening for colon cancer. If a patient has a first degree relative with a colorectal cancer or advanced polyp under the age of 60, we usually recommend that patients start their colorectal cancer screening at age 40. If they have a first degree relative, such as a parent or sibling that had colorectal cancer or an advanced polyp under the age of 50, let's say 45, we recommend starting 10 years prior to that incident of disease. For instance, a 45-year-old brother who had colorectal cancer, we would recommend their siblings undergo colorectal cancer screening starting at age 35 and, then, every five years thereafter.

[MUSIC PLAYING]