

Immunochemical Faecal Occult Blood Test as a Screening Tool for Colorectal Cancer: A Retrospective Audit in Hospital Sri Aman, Sarawak

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Abstract:

Background:

Colorectal cancer is the second most common cancer in Malaysia. Immunochemical faecal occult blood test (iFOBT) is the preferred method to screen for colorectal cancer and is readily available at all clinics in Malaysia. Individuals with positive iFOBT result are referred to tertiary hospital for a colonoscopy and further management.

Aim:

To determine the efficacy of immunochemical faecal occult blood test (iFOBT) as a screening tool for colorectal cancer in Hospital Sri Aman, Sarawak.

Method:

A retrospective audit was done for all cases that were referred to Hospital Sri Aman for positive iFOBT result from September 2023 to May 2025. Data were obtained from the Malaysian Gastrointestinal Registry (MGIR) which include patients' demographic and colonoscopy findings, as well as the subsequent histopathological examination results when a biopsy was performed.

Results:

Forty-nine patients underwent colonoscopy for positive iFOBT from September 2023 to May 2025. Thirteen (26.5%) were identified to have cancer while another 13 (26.5%) had benign polyps, which are considered precursor lesions to colorectal cancer. Nineteen of them (38.8%) had normal colonoscopy finding and the remaining four individuals (8.2%) had other diagnoses such as colitis, haemorrhoids or diverticular disease.

Conclusion:

Immunochemical faecal occult blood test (iFOBT) is a useful screening tool for colorectal cancer in Malaysia. A comprehensive nationwide audit is proposed to determine its long-term efficacy and value.

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