

Awareness of the U.S. population about recommended cancer screenings

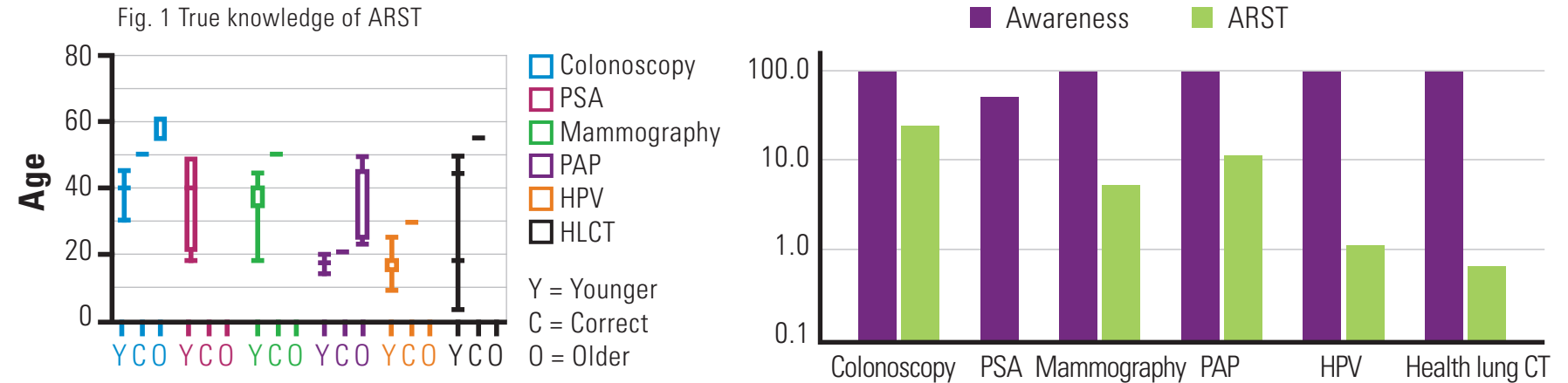
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Introduction: Limited number of studies evaluated awareness of recommended screening tests and the age when recommended screening tests (ARST) should be done in general population. The goal of our observational study was to evaluate this knowledge within the United States of America (USA).

Materials and Methods: We sent an anonymous questionnaire to the USA population age 18 – 69 balanced, to the basic census using the SurveyMonkey. We used current United States Preventive Task Force recommendations as a gold standard. Participants reported the next information: applicability of the test based on sex, if they heard about test or not, knowledge of ARST. Awareness was measured among patients who were familiar with the test regardless of knowing ARST. All responses were reviewed for quality. Those with inconsistencies of reported sex in different questions were removed from analysis.

Results: We collected 299 responses and after review for quality 146 (48.8%) were selected: 60 (43.48%) males and 86 (53.42%) females. Only 3 respondents (3.49%) reported that they never heard of mammography. 2 respondents (2.33%) never heard of PAP smear and 5 (5.81%) respondents never heard of human papilloma virus (HPV) screen. 15 respondents (10.27%) were not aware of colonoscopy. 28% never heard of prostate specific antigen (PSA). Health lung computer tomography (HLCT) was a newly discovered test for 82 persons (56.16%). Only 38 persons knew the ARST for colonoscopy (26.03%). 10 patients knew ARST for PAP smear (11.64%) and 5 (5.81%) for mammography. For PSA, HPV and HLCT only 0, 1 (1.16%), 1 (0.68%), respectively, were able to tell correct ARST. (Tab. 1) Respondents who tried to tell ARST usually tend to report younger age that required: PSA 100%, mammography 91.6%, PAP 66%, HPV 96.3% and 75% for HLCT. (Tab.2, Fig.1)

Conclusions: Our findings were limited by the use of the convenience sample and the high number of excluded responses. Awareness about recommended screening test, except HLCT was high. Knowledge of ARST remained poor among the population for all tests, with the best knowledge for colonoscopy. The general population believes that ARST should be done is earlier than recommended.



Tab. 1 Awareness of the population about the cancer screening

	I have never heard of this test	I heard of this test, but I do not know age, when it should be done	I heard of this test before. The first test should be done at the age of (wrong response)	I heard of this test before. The first test should be done at the age of (correct response)
Colonoscopy (146)	15 (10.27%)	63 (43.15%)	68 (46.58%)	38 (26.03%)
PSA (60)	28 (46.67%)	25 (41.67%)	7 (11.67%)	0 (0%)
Mammography (86)	3 (3.49%)	35 (40.7%)	48 (55.81%)	5 (5.81%)
PAP (86)	2 (2.33%)	34 (39.53%)	50 (58.14%)	10 (11.63%)
HPV (86)	5 (5.81%)	57 (66.28%)	26 (30.23%)	1 (1.16%)
Health-lung CT (146)	82 (56.16%)	61 (41.78%)	3 (2.05%)	1 (0.68%)

Tab. 2 True Knowledge in population, who were confident to respond

Test	All Patient			Younger			Correct			Older		
	N	Median	Mean	N	Median	Mean	N	Median	Mean	N	Median	Mean
Colonoscopy	68	50	46.1	25 (36.6%)	40	40.6	38 (58.8%)	50	50	5 (4.9%)	60	58
PSA	7	40	37.4	7 (100%)	40	37.4	—	—	—	—	—	—
Mammography	48	39.2	40	44 (91.6%)	38	40	5 (8.4%)	50	50	—	—	—
PAP	50	18	19.9	33 (66%)	18	17.6	10 (20%)	21	21	7 (14%)	25	29
HPV	27	18	17.2	26 (96.3%)	17	16.7	1 (0.7%)	30	30	—	—	—
HLCT	4	34	31.5	3 (75%)	18	23.7	1 (25%)	55	55	—	—	—