Bowel cancer awareness and screening

Susanne Line
Cancer Incidence and Mortality Victoria 2010

New cases = 28,363
Deaths = 10,673

Cancer Type

Prostate: Incidence = 4938, Death = 840
Bowel: Incidence = 3699, Death = 1330
Breast: Incidence = 3537, Death = 771
Lung: Incidence = 2340, Death = 1887
Melanoma: Incidence = 2256, Death = 297

Victorian Cancer Registry 2012
Bowel Cancer (CRC) in Australia

- 2nd most common cause of cancer-related death
- 2nd highest rate in the world
- 73 Australians die/week
- Affects men and women
- Lifetime average risk to 85 is males 1:10, females 1:14
- ↑ incidence >30% next 5-10 years as population ages

90% of bowel cancers are curable when detected early (Stage A) through screening
Screening with FOBT

- CCV, NHMRC, RACGP, GESA recommend screening every 2 years for all men and women aged 50+ with no signs and symptoms, or no family history of bowel cancer
- FOBT is a simple screening test, hygienic and painless, done privately at home
- FOBT finds invisible blood in tiny samples from 2 separate bowel motions
- Doesn’t diagnose bowel cancer but can identify who needs further investigation
- Can reduce mortality by >30% among participants

FOBT = Faecal Occult Blood Test
National Bowel Cancer Screening Program (NBCSP)

- Current phase = men and women aged 50, 55, 65
- 2013 = 60 y.o. also invited; 70 y.o. from 2015, then full implementation (biennial screening) from 2017/2018
- Biogrid Australia report (July 2012) shows:
  - NBCSP asymptomatic participants diagnosed at earlier stage
  - 52% of positive FOBT have bowel cancer or adenoma
  - More Stage A cancers found; fewer Stage D cancers found
  - 5 year survival = 95% (vs 73% for patients with symptoms)
  - Data analysis supports the evidence that early detection is key to higher survival rates

Summary – earlier diagnosis through NBCSP is translating into improved survival
Free FOBT sent to men and women turning 50, 55 or 65; will include age 60 from 2013
InSure iFOBT

- For people aged 50+ who are ineligible for NBCSP
- Sold by Enterix Australia, CCV and some pharmacies
- Also available from some GPs
- Medicare rebate if signed copy of pathology form (from GP) is sent to lab with samples
Bowel cancer kills over 70 Australians each week

Test for bowel cancer from the comfort of your own throne

Ninety percent of bowel cancers can be cured if found early. Screening for bowel cancer is easy. It involves doing a simple test in the privacy of your own home. Cancer Council Victoria recommends screening for bowel cancer every two years from the age of 50. Because bowel cancer often develops without symptoms, doing this simple test could save your life. If you are 50 or over speak to your doctor or purchase a kit from Cancer Council Victoria at www.cancervic.org.au/boweltest or by calling 13 11 20. Kits are $30 or $22 for pensioners and healthcare card holders.