

Does Every Patient Need Colonoscopy Follow-up for Diverticulitis?

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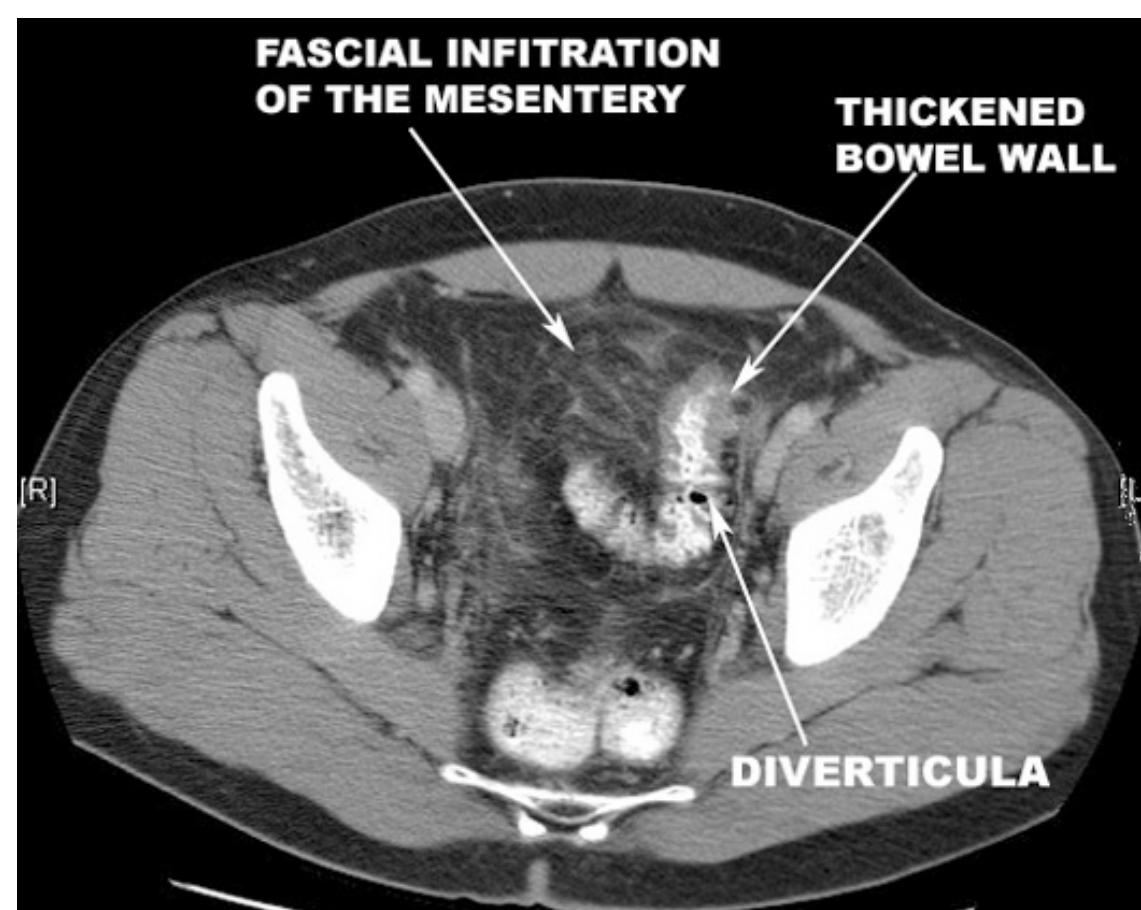


Background

- The American College of Gastroenterology recommends colonoscopy as follow-up after an episode of diverticulitis.
- Diverticulitis has been associated with the diagnosis of colon cancer.
- There is limited data on the yield of colonoscopy in this setting.
- Studies suggest that colonoscopy may only be warranted after episodes of complicated diverticulitis, which are associated with a higher likelihood of the presence of occult colon cancer.

Project Goals

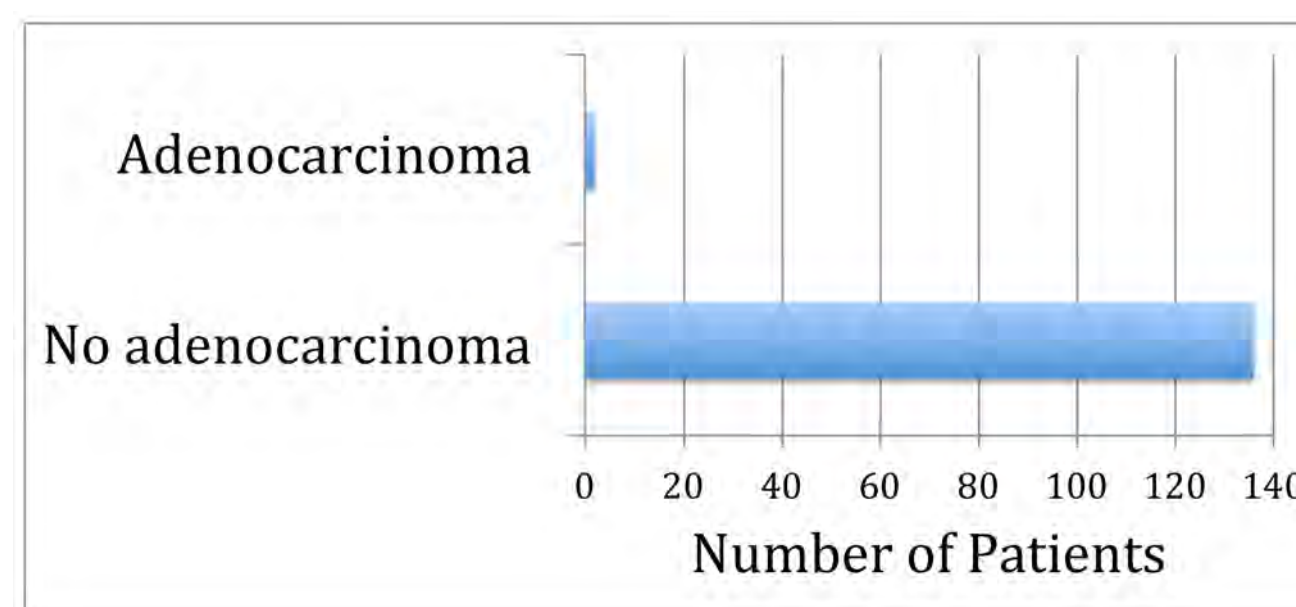
- The objective is to retrospectively examine the results of colonoscopy for follow-up of diverticulitis at our center.
- We are specifically looking for newly diagnosed carcinoma of the colon.
- This may help to develop future guidelines for follow-up.



CT scan with GI contrast showing findings of diverticulitis.
<http://www.meddean.luc.edu/lumen/MedEd/Radio/curriculum/Surgery/diverticulitis2.htm>

Methods

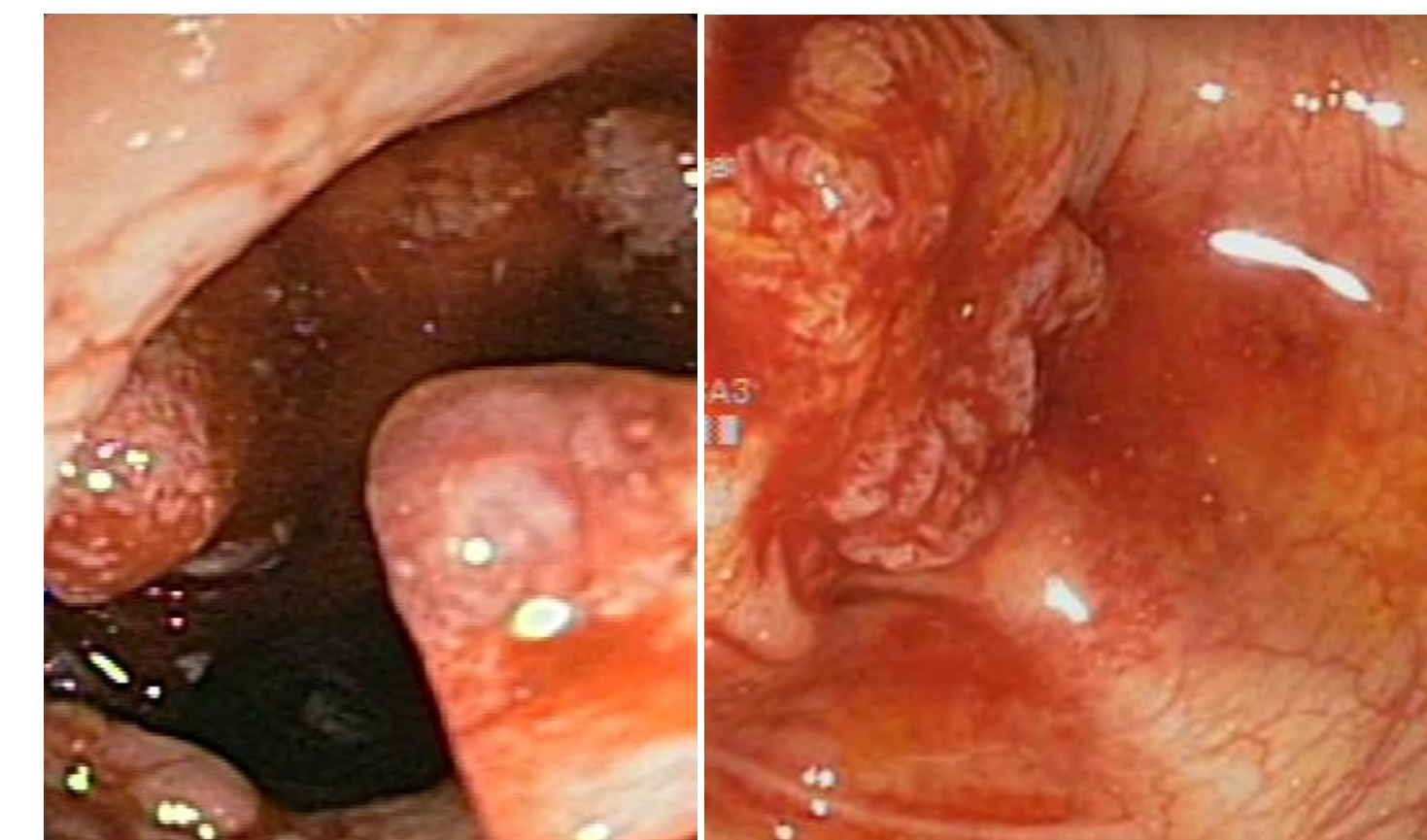
- The electronic medical record was searched for patients with colonoscopy performed for diverticulitis in the past five years.
- 521 charts were screened, 136 with CT-proven diverticulitis and sufficient documentation were included.
- History, imaging, colonoscopy findings, and pathology were reviewed.
- A descriptive analysis was performed and patient subgroups were compared using Fisher's exact test.



Two of 136 diverticulitis patients were found to have adenocarcinoma of the sigmoid colon on follow-up colonoscopy. Median time to follow-up was 72 days.

Results

- Two adenocarcinomas of the sigmoid colon were diagnosed after follow-up colonoscopy in 136 diverticulitis patients (1.5%).
- Both were diagnosed after uncomplicated diverticulitis, and neither had previous colonoscopies.
- Both localized to the same area as the diverticulitis.
- There was no significant difference between rates of carcinoma diagnosed among subgroups examined.



Colonoscopy images of adenocarcinoma of the sigmoid colon found on follow-up for diverticulitis.

Conclusions

- We believe colonoscopy should still be pursued after any episode of diverticulitis to rule out occult colon cancer.
- More evidence is needed before recommending changes to the current guidelines.
- We are looking back further in the electronic medical record to increase our sample size.

Acknowledgments

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