

Health Education Increases Colon Cancer Screening Rate

Colon cancer is the second commonest cancer in Hong Kong after lung cancer. The incidence of colon cancer increases to over 3,500 new cases per year in 2002. Colon cancer ranks third for males and second for females for all cancer deaths in 2002.

The Department of Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, the University of Hong Kong has conducted a study which revealed that health education program can increase the rate of participation in screening for colon cancer using either Faecal Occult Blood Testing (FOBT) or colonoscopy. Overseas data showed that participation rate of FOBT in the general population ranged from 18.4% to 26%. In this local study, close to 100% of the audiences agreed for FOBT after a health talk. The study also showed that more people accepted FOBT as a screening test than colonoscopy. More colon cancer education programs are recommended to increase public knowledge about the disease and encourage regular screening, which could help to prevent cancer formation or detect cancer at an early stage