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Increasing colorectal cancer screening adherence through informed decisions, social support, and mhealth

Kelly Brittain

Michigan State University, USA

Colorectal cancer is the third leading cause of cancer death among Americans. CRC is a major health threat to women 50-64 years of age as CRC incidence and mortality rates among women have risen near the rates of men. Increasing colorectal cancer screening from 50% to 70% is of importance to the health of the nation as evidenced by CRC screening being a “Leading Health Indicator” for Healthy People 2020. It is estimated that CRC deaths could be reduced by 50% if the current screening guidelines were adhered to. Factors known to obstruct CRC screening include: inadequate communication by health care providers about the importance of CRC screening, fear, lack of knowledge, or lack social support related to CRC screening. Previous research indicates that health care provider recommendation is a key factor in CRC screening adherence. However, there is often a difference between what the provider recommends and what the patient prefers related to CRC screening. Prior single and multi-level interventions to address CRC screening barriers and promote CRC screening such as reminder postcards and interactive computer programs have not improved screening rates and can be very expensive to maintain. Preliminary studies indicate that an emphasis on increasing colorectal cancer screening informed decisions, assessing social support regarding colorectal cancer screening, and incorporating mhealth strategies into primary care may be a method to address to increase colorectal cancer screening uptake.

Biography

Kelly Brittain is an Associate Professor in the College of Nursing. Her research aims to improve cancer health disparities by helping individuals make informed decisions about cancer screening and risk reduction. Her colorectal cancer screening adherence intervention use mobile technology and social media to improve informed decisions about colorectal cancer screening among women. Her most recent study examined the influences and barriers to a Mediterranean Diet to reduce colorectal cancer risk among African Americans. She has published and presented in the areas of colorectal cancer screening, informed decisions, web-based psychoeducational intervention, social support, and sociocultural differences.

kelly.brittain@hc.msu.edu

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