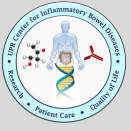




# Knowledge about preventive health guidelines for Inflammatory Bowel Diseases in patients: A quality improvement project

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## Background

- Preventive care guidelines for patients with Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD) emphasize the need for a patient-centered interdisciplinary approach, with assessment and management of the patient's physical and mental health as well as the IBD.
- Given the severity of their primary health condition (IBD) and the frequency of follow up for this, the patients usually consider their gastroenterologist to be their primary care provider.
- There is no data about compliance with current IBD preventive care guidelines in Puerto Rico.

## Objective

- This study aims to evaluate the current practice regarding preventive care in the UPR IBD clinic, and knowledge among patients and gastroenterologists about the IBD preventive care.

## Methods

- This is a cross-sectional 3-phase study that includes a retrospective medical record review, an anonymous online survey of gastroenterologists, and an anonymous survey of the patients. However, we reported the results of the patient's survey.
- Adult patients with an established diagnosis of at least 6 months of ulcerative colitis (UC), Crohn's disease (CD) or indeterminate colitis (IC), were recruited from the IBD Clinics and through IBD-related social media.
- 14-questions survey with questions referent to IBD health maintenance matters, was filled in the clinic and online using Google forms.
- Statistical analysis was performed using descriptive statistics.
- Comparisons of proportions and means between groups was based on Fisher's exact and chi square tests.
- For all tests, a p value <0.05 was considered statistically significant
- The study was approved by the MSC IRB.

## Results

- 83 patients completed the survey, 42 from the clinics and 41 through social media.
- 60% had CD, 47.4% were diagnosed more than 10 years ago, 57.9% were younger than 38 years old and 68% were on immunosuppressants/biologics.
- 83.13% and 60.24% of patients knew that COVID and Influenza vaccines were indicated, respectively.
- Only 42.17%, 36.14%, 32.53% and 31.33% of patients knew about indications for HPV, pneumococcal, varicella and zoster vaccines, respectively.
- There was a statistically significant difference about knowledge regarding screening for latent TB (p=0.019), anxiety and depression (p= 0.03) and smoking status (p=0.033) between CD and UC/IC patients, as shown in Table 1.

## Tables

**Table 1.** Knowledge of patients with IBD about screening

Variable	CD	UC/IC	Total	p-value
<b>Latent TB</b>				<b>0.019:</b>
Yes	37 (46.84%)	15 (18.99%)	52 (65.82%)	
No	3 (3.80%)	2 (2.53%)	5 (6.33%)	
Don't know	8 (10.13%)	14 (17.72%)	22 (27.85%)	
Total	48 (60.76%)	31 (39.24%)	79 (100.00%)	
<b>Anxiety &amp; depression</b>				<b>0.003:</b>
Yes	46 (56.79%)	24 (29.63%)	70 (86.42%)	
No	1 (1.23%)	2 (2.47%)	3 (3.70%)	
Don't know	1 (1.23%)	7 (8.64%)	8 (9.88%)	
Total	48 (59.26%)	33 (40.74%)	81 (100.00%)	
<b>Smoking cessation</b>				<b>0.033:</b>
Yes	48 (59.26%)	27 (33.33%)	75 (92.59%)	
No	0 (0.00%)	1 (1.23%)	1 (1.23%)	
Don't know	1 (1.23%)	4 (4.94%)	5 (6.17%)	
Total	49 (60.49%)	32 (39.51%)	81 (100.00%)	

Note:  $\chi^2$ , Fisher exact<sup>2</sup>

Note. Due to rounding error, percentages may not sum to 100%.

## Conclusions

- Our study showed a significant lack of knowledge about IBD preventive care in patients.
- Attempts should be made to encourage patients with IBD empowerment regarding knowledge and compliance with preventive care guidelines in order to increase high value care in this population.
- The results of the review of records from the clinic as well as the knowledge of gastroenterologists will point out other deficiencies in the healthcare system and help design methods to improve patient care.
- Another aspect that needs to be explored is access to preventive measures such as vaccines.

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## Disclosures

- The authors of this study have no financial interest and have not received any compensation for conducting the research.

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