

AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION HOUSE OF DELEGATES

Resolution: 421
(A-22)

Introduced by: Pennsylvania

Subject: Screening for HPV-Related Anal Cancer

Referred to: Reference Committee D

1 Whereas, 8,300 adults in the US will be diagnosed with anal cancer with an estimated 1,280
2 deaths in 2019¹; and
3
4 Whereas, The human papillomavirus (HPV) causes more than 90% of anal cancers² and HPV
5 testing can be conducted via screening anal Pap test and/or HPV test; and
6
7 Whereas, Studies have identified the value of anal cancer screening for high-risk populations
8 since AMA policy was adopted to support continued research on the diagnosis and treatment of
9 anal cancer and its precursor lesions, including the evaluation of the anal pap smear as a
10 screening tool for anal cancer³; and
11
12 Whereas, The American Society for Colon and Rectal Surgeons (ASCRS) has developed a
13 strong recommendation based on moderate quality evidence, 1B, stating that patients at
14 increased risk for anal squamous neoplasms should be identified by history, physical
15 examination and laboratory testing, noting that the risk is higher in HIV-positive individuals, men
16 who have sex with men (MSM), and women with a history of cervical dysplasia⁴; and
17
18 Whereas, The American Cancer Society reports expert opinion that (1) anal pap smear testing
19 is a reasonable approach for screening patients at increased risk by swabbing the anal lining for
20 microscopic analysis; (2) although there is no widespread agreement on the best screening
21 schedule, some experts recommend the test be done every year in MSM or HIV-positive
22 individuals and every 2-3 years in the HIV-negative population; (3) patients with positive results
23 on an anal pap test should be referred for a biopsy; and (4) if anal intraepithelial neoplasia is
24 found on the biopsy, it might need to be treated especially if it is high grade⁵; and
25
26 Whereas, An expert panel convened by the American Society for Colposcopy and Cervical
27 Pathology and the International Anal Neoplasia Society suggests that HIV-positive women and
28 women with lower genital tract neoplasia may be considered for screening with anal cytology
29 and triage to treatment if anal high-grade squamous intraepithelial lesions (HSIL) is diagnosed⁶;
30 and
31
32 Whereas, Dacron swab cytology provides modest sensitivity and nylon-flocked swab cytology
33 has higher specificity and accuracy for detecting high grade squamous intraepithelial lesion in
34 anal cancer and has been proposed to lower costs of population-based screening⁷; and
35
36 Whereas, Preliminary analyses have shown anal cancer screening to be cost effective for HIV-
37 positive individuals, MSM, and women with a history of cervical dysplasia with quality life
38 adjusted years (QALYs) increases of 4.4 years at a cost of \$34,763 per life year gained overall,
39 and particular cost effectiveness of annual anal pap testing for MSM at a cost of \$16,000 per
40 QALY saved⁸; therefore be it

- 1 RESOLVED, That our American Medical Association support advocacy efforts to implement
2 screening for anal cancer for high-risk populations (New HOD Policy); and be it further
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4 RESOLVED, That our AMA support national medical specialty organizations and other
5 stakeholders in developing guidelines for interpretation, follow up, and management of anal
6 cancer screening results. (New HOD Policy)

Fiscal Note: Not yet determined

Received: 05/06/22

References

1. Cancer Facts & Figures 2019
2. About HPV / HPV & Cancer. <https://www.analcancerfoundation.org/about-hpv/hpv-cancer/>
3. Use of the Anal Pap Smear as a Screening Tool for Anal Dysplasia H-460.913
4. Stewart, DB, et al. The American Society of Colon and Rectal Surgeons Clinical Practice Guidelines for Anal Squamous Cell Cancers: Dis of Colon & Rect. 2018 61(7): 755–774.
5. American Cancer Society Anal Screening: <https://www.cancer.org/cancer/anal-cancer/detection-diagnosis-staging.html>
6. Moscicki AB, et al. Screening for Anal Cancer in Women. Journal of Lower Genital Tract Disease. 2015 Jul; 19(3):S27-S42.
7. Wiley DJ, et al. Comparison of nylon-flocked swab and Dacron swab cytology for anal HSIL detection in transgender women and gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men. Cancer Cytopathol. 2019 Apr; 127(4):247-257.
8. Wells J, et al. An integrative review of guidelines for anal cancer screening in HIV-infected persons. AIDS Patient Care STDS. 2014 Jul;28(7):350-7.

RELEVANT AMA POLICY

Use of the Anal Pap Smear as a Screening Tool for Anal Dysplasia H-460.913

Our AMA supports continued research on the diagnosis and treatment of anal cancer and its precursor lesions, including the evaluation of the anal pap smear as a screening tool for anal cancer.

Citation: (Res. 512, A-04; Reaffirmed: CSAPH Rep. 1, A-14)