BARRIERS ASSOCIATED WITH PREVENTATIVE HEALTH BEHAVIOR IN ADULTS AND CHILDREN AT EXTREME RISK FOR HEREDITARY COLORECTAL CANCER.

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FAP is a hereditary disorder caused by a mutation of the adenomatous polyposis coli gene (APC). Individuals that are diagnosed with this disorder have virtually 100% chance of developing colon or rectal cancer if the organs are not surgically removed. Through early detection methods such as colonoscopies and sigmoidoscopies, patients have a much greater chance of cancer prevention and early detection. In this cross-sectional research study, we elicited barriers to obtaining screening exams by asking participants open ended questions pertaining to past screening experiences. Content analyses and coding of these questions were done by two independent raters. Themes that emerged for the question eliciting barriers to screening were: cost/lack of health insurance, procedure was painful/embarrassing, dislike for the preparation process, and fear of the procedure. However, while many of the participants found that they disliked the procedures, a large number of individuals also believed them to be life saving measures. These later individuals demonstrated knowledge of the severity of their genetic disorder. This understanding seemed to motivate individuals with or at risk for the disorder to overcome barriers associated with past screenings. The information gathered by this study may help health care providers place higher importance on cancer screening education for patients who have a family history of FAP. Also by assessing barriers to cancer screening and helping overcome these barriers, health care providers may play a critical role in reducing morbidity and mortality from this serious but preventable disease.