

EAQ162CD Clinical Trial Results Summary

Financial Burden Assessment in Patients with Stage 1-3 Colon or Rectal Cancer Undergoing Treatment

What did this trial involve and who was it for?

As cancer therapies have greatly improved over the last few decades, the time and cost requirements for treatment have also increased. Studies have shown that American patients are often equally or more worried about the costs of treating their cancer than having the disease itself. Yet not much information has been available on the individual financial challenges they face. The EAQ162CD study aimed to look at these financial challenges. Learning more about how cancer and its treatment affect people financially over time can help create better programs to ease those challenges.

EAQ162CD was for people with newly diagnosed stage 1, 2, or 3 colon or rectal cancer who were already planning to receive treatment at a community cancer center. A total of 450 study participants were asked to complete questionnaires at the time of their study enrollment, and complete them again at 3, 6, 12, and 24 months. The questionnaires collected information about topics such as the participants' characteristics (for example, age, race, income level), health insurance, employment, and financial resources and challenges.

What are the results?

- 60.5% of patients, regardless of personal background or financial circumstances, reported experiencing financial hardships at diagnosis. Over time, these hardships tended to decrease, with 35% of patients reporting financial hardships at 2 years. Financial worry fluctuates throughout the cancer survivorship period, and the study suggested that this decrease may be due to patients experiencing less anxiety after navigating their health insurance plans and up-front costs of treatment.
- However, some groups of patients experienced less of a decrease in their financial hardships over time, such as those who were unemployed, had government health insurance, or were less confident in their ability to effectively handle the challenges of cancer treatment.

What do the results mean for patients?

- The results suggest that cancer treatment planning should include screening for financial difficulties. Support for patients newly diagnosed with early-stage cancer should focus on offering financial counseling and increasing patients' confidence to handle cancer treatment-related challenges.
- ECOG-ACRIN researchers are currently developing a study to test whether video chats with a trained financial navigator will improve access to financial resources and ease anxiety for young adults with cancer.

For more information, go to:

- United States National Institutes of Health (NIH) Library of Medicine:
<https://clinicaltrials.gov/study/NCT03516942>
 - *JAMA Network Open* (Jan. 2024):
<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2813746>
 - *JAMA Network Open* (Sept. 2024):
<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2823609>
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About ECOG-ACRIN

This trial was led by the ECOG-ACRIN Cancer Research Group (ECOG-ACRIN). ECOG-ACRIN is a membership-based scientific organization that designs and conducts cancer research involving adults who have or are at risk of developing cancer. ECOG-ACRIN is a component of the National Cancer Institute's National Clinical Trials Network. Learn more at www.ecog-acrin.org.

To all the patients that participated in this trial, thank you. Your participation, and that of other patients like you, made this research possible.