Differences in Colorectal Cancer Risk Knowledge Among Alabamians: Screening Implications

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Colorectal cancer (CRC) is a leading cause of cancer mortality and morbidity in the United States. It is the second leading cause of cancer death and the third most common cancer diagnosed in men and women (American Cancer Society [ACS], 2015a). Several risk factors for CRC are considered to be nonmodifiable, such as age, gastrointestinal disorders, and family history. Age is the primary risk factor for CRC, with 90% of cases occurring in those aged 50 years or older. Certain gastrointestinal disorders—including inflammatory bowel disease, Crohn’s disease, and ulcerative colitis, as well as familial adenomatous polyposis and Lynch syndrome (also known as hereditary nonpolyposis CRC, Lynch syndrome is an autosomal dominant hereditary disease process)—can increase an individual’s risk of cancer, specifically CRC (ACS, 2015b; Hampel et al., 2008). Personal or family history of CRC or colorectal polyps is also a risk factor. Aside from these risks, numerous modifiable risk factors also increase CRC risk, including lack...