

Patterns in Prostate-Specific Antigen Test Use and Digital Rectal Examinations in the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2002-2006

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Background: Studies have examined prostate-specific antigen (PSA) test use and digital rectal examinations (DREs) among men aged 40 or older, however, few have examined these patterns together over time.

Objectives: To examine PSA test use and DREs among men over time using three years of data, 2002, 2004, and 2006. Also, to identify correlates associated with test use over time of PSA test use, DRE, and both procedures combined.

Methods: The BRFSS collects data on prostate cancer screening test use in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. We used data collected on PSA and DRE for three years, 2002, 2004, and 2006. There were 229,574 males 40 years of age or older. All data were weighted using SUDAAN to generate population-based estimates. Trends in PSA and DRE use were examined overall and by specific demographic and health-related characteristics. Correlates of recent PSA and recent DRE were determined using logistic regression.

Results: Overall, PSA test use within 2 years declined from 2002 to 2004 (52.5% to 51.4%) and increased from 2004 to 2006 (51.4% to 54.7%). DRE use also declined between 2002 and 2004 (56.4% to 55.1%). Having had a recent PSA test (within 2 years) only, a recent DRE only, or both also varied by sociodemographic and health-related variables. Older age, non-Hispanic black or Hispanic ethnicity, being married, having higher levels of education, higher body mass index (BMI), having health insurance and a usual source of healthcare increased the odds of having a recent PSA. Similar associations were found for having a recent DRE and both procedures combined.

Conclusion: Findings allow the examination of PSA and DRE test use over time as well as the identification of predictors of these screening behaviors. However, declines in PSA test use for 2002-2004 may be less clear since major organizations are not in agreement about the efficacy of prostate cancer screening.