

COVID-19 Anxiety and Colorectal Cancer Screening Attitudes Among Adult Men in Turkey

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OBJECTIVES: To examine the relationship between levels of anxiety about COVID-19 and attitudes toward colorectal cancer screening in adult men in Turkey.

SAMPLE & SETTING: The participants in this study were 188 adult men, aged 50–70 years, who were not diagnosed with cancer, and who could use social media. The researchers shared the link to the study forms through social media, and data were collected between February 2021 and May 2021.

METHODS & VARIABLES: A personal information form, the Coronavirus Anxiety Scale, and the Attitude Scale for Cancer Screening were used to collect descriptive research data.

RESULTS: Participants had mean scores of 1.04 (SD = 2.12) for the Coronavirus Anxiety Scale and 95.28 (SD = 16.91) for the Attitude Scale for Cancer Screening. There was no significant correlation between the scores ($p > 0.05$). Family structure and the reasons for applying for colorectal cancer screening were significantly related to participation in colorectal cancer screening programs ($p < 0.05$).

IMPLICATIONS FOR NURSING: Individualized screening models can be used to prevent the deferral of cancer screenings. To ensure early diagnosis of colorectal cancer, nurses should be encouraged to use telehealth applications and help individuals perform immunochemical tests at home.

KEYWORDS COVID-19 pandemic; prevention; COVID-19 anxiety; colorectal cancer; early diagnosis
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COVID-19, caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus, was first observed in Wuhan, China. It was recognized as a pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO) on March 11th, 2020 (Dai et al., 2020; Portnoy et al., 2020). COVID-19 rapidly spread throughout the world. Because of its virulence and the uncertainty about its course, treatment, and efficacy of protective measures, social life changed dramatically. This has had a negative impact on the physical and psychological well-being of individuals (Akkuzu et al., 2020). Psychological problems caused or exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic include fear, anxiety, stress, mood changes, deterioration of health, workforce losses, economic problems, and education problems (Lee, 2020). The WHO expressed concerns about the mental health impact and psychosocial consequences of the pandemic (World Health Organization, 2020).

Large-scale studies on individuals at risk for COVID-19 infection have found significant levels of traumatic stress (73%), depression (51%), anxiety (45%), and insomnia (36%) (Liu et al., 2020). Globally, studies have also found increased levels of anxiety, depression, loneliness, drug and alcohol misuse, suicide, and self-harm during the pandemic (Li et al., 2020; Moukaddam & Shah, 2020; Yao et al., 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic has also limited the admission of adults and elderly individuals to healthcare institutions for the diagnosis and treatment of chronic diseases (Çölgeçen & Çölgeçen, 2020; Göksu & Kumcağız, 2020; Tekpınar et al., 2018; Thornhill & Fincher, 2014; Wang et al., 2020).

Colorectal cancer has the fourth-highest incidence (20%) of all cancer types (Global Cancer Observatory, 2020). Although it is more common in men than in women, it ranks third (11%) among all causes of cancer-related death. Researchers predict