

## Special Issue on The Benefits and Risks of Medical Screening Program

### Call for Papers

Screening tests are considered a triumph of modern public health medicine. Medical screening is very popular worldwide, and millions of people go through myriad of screening programs every year, consuming enormous resources. The doctors preach everyday as an important means of practicing preventive medicine. The public expects screening to find the disease early and cure it. There are many who faithfully follow the simple rule of annual screening, a behavior viewed as highly desirable. Procrastinators were blamed for their oversight, particularly when the disease was found in its advanced stage. It turns out that many of the screening tests fall far short on this promise. Screening per se does not improve health. This is obvious but tends to be forgotten. For example, not all prostate cancer or breast cancer will kill, so some when found can be better left alone. The problem is that our medical technology is not good enough to tell apart those fatal from harmless ones. According to USPSTF, the number of truly effective screening procedures is small. Screening is not just to identify the disease or find the cancer but should be able to prolong and improve the quality of life as a result of screening. The public expects a lot more than what current screenings can deliver. More troublesome is that the benefits of screening have been clouded by the false-positive and false-negative and the lack of followup in many of the positive findings. Not only resources are wasted because of screenings, but also harms can be done once screening was started and the "cascade effect" took over. The golden rule of screening is "first do no harm", but harms or unnecessary screenings are common. At the same time, many of the unhealthy behavioral risks that need to be changed to improve health, such as smoking or physical inactivity, are well known to the individuals without the need of the high-tech screenings to find out. In this special issue, screenings will be evaluated from the public health perspective as well as the individual perspective as to their benefits and risks, reviewing the current literature and addressing the controversial issues. Potential topics include, but are not limited to:

- The objectives of medical screenings: the expected versus the actually delivered
- The current recommendations: the benefits and the controversies

- The overdiagnosis of medical screenings: an underappreciated reality
- Who benefits the most from screenings? Ways to improve cost-effectiveness
- The business of medical screenings: the subtle issue of conflict of interests
- Overall review or examples of the benefits and risks of medical screening
- Cost-effectiveness of individual screening program
- The future of medical screenings: how to tip the balance between benefits and risks

Before submission authors should carefully read over the journal's Author Guidelines, which are located at <http://www.hindawi.com/journals/jeph/guidelines/>. Prospective authors should submit an electronic copy of their complete manuscript through the journal Manuscript Tracking System at <http://mts.hindawi.com/> according to the following timetable:

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