

# Colorectal cancer prevention: strategies for promoting literacy

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## Abstract

### Background

Colorectal cancer (CRC) is the most frequent and deadly cancer in Portugal, prevention and early detection with screening are key factors for decreasing the incidence of CRC and improving survival rates. CRC screenings allow the detection of benign situations and their remotion, preventing the development of a malignant condition. Thus, this study aimed to identify strategies that could promote CRC literacy in order to also increase the number of screenings.

### Methods

A systematic review (SR) was performed using PICOS methodology to define study goals and then PRISMA methodology to collect data for the review, including intervention studies published from 2010.

### Results

A final number of 11 articles were included in this SR, which used several strategies to promote literacy. These studies included patients mostly within the age range of 50–75 years. The different strategies identified contained delivering pamphlets, seminars, using technological solutions, among others. All of these educational strategies led to the breaking down of some barriers that might exist about screening and bowel preparation, which conduced to an increase in adherence to CRC screening. Since most of the studies were performed in populations presenting low health literacy or belonging to ethnic minorities, strategies such as verbal information sessions showed better results.

## Conclusions

Several strategies seems to be effective, since the results of different interventions have translated into increased CCR literacy and also the number of screenings. Portuguese pharmacy professionals, given easy access and user confidence can contribute directly, as a future perspective, in the education of patients with CCR.

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**Keywords:** Colorectal cancer, screening, strategies, knowledge, health literacy

**Topic:** cancer, colorectal cancer, minority groups, patient education, pharmacies, portugal, survival rate, knowledge acquisition, pharmacy (field), literacy, bowel preparation, health literacy, colorectal cancer screening, early diagnosis, prevention, portuguese

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