

The Association between Level of Education and the Propensity to get a Prostate Specific Antigen Test

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Objective: To assess the association between educational level and completing a PSA screening in 40–69-year-old men in the US, and whether the association is modified by health insurance status.

Methods: An analytical, cross-sectional study using secondary data analysis from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System 2021 database was conducted. The study participants included 40–69 years-old men in New Jersey, 2021. The independent variable was education level (less than high school, graduated from high school, completed some college/technical school, and graduated college/technical school). The dependent variable was completing a PSA screening. Covariates included age, employment status, exercise, smoking, race/ethnicity, cancer history, and marital status. Unadjusted and adjusted logistic regression analysis was used to calculate odds ratios (OR) and 95% confidence intervals (CI).

Results: Our sample included 1,440 men aged 40–69 who lived in New Jersey in 2021. Health insurance status did not modify the association between educational level and obtaining a PSA screening (p-value>0.05). Individuals who graduated from college/technical school were more likely to be screened compared with individuals who only graduated from high school (OR 1.81; 95% CI 1.18–2.78) when adjusted for covariates.

Conclusion: Public education campaigns that focus on increasing the community's health literacy about PSA screenings may lead to an increased promotion of PSA screenings. Future research at the cohort level should assess the relationship between education level and PSA testing, considering unaccounted variables such as a family history of prostate cancer, language barriers, and accessibility to healthcare centers.

Keywords: Prostate cancer, education level, PSA screening