Docs Urge for More HIV Testing Regardless of Risk Factor

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The American College of Physicians recommends that doctors routinely screen all patients for HIV, regardless of their risk factors for infection, *The New York Times* reports.

“Right now it’s estimated 1 million to 1.2 million Americans have HIV,” said Amir Qaseem, MD, senior medical associate with the college. “We’re recommending clinicians just adopt routine screening in their patients.” New estimates show that one in five HIV-positive people in the United States is unaware of their status.

According to the article, the college’s guidelines differ from those of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), which recommends routine HIV testing for patients until age 64 unless the HIV prevalence rate is less than 0.1 in the patient population. They also differ from those of the U.S. Preventive Service Task Force, which calls for routine screening only for patients at increased risk of infection.

Hospitals are urged to incorporate HIV screening into their daily care because early diagnoses maximizes the benefit from antiretroviral therapy and may help decrease inadvertent transmissions.

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