

AUTHOR'S REPLY

Dear Sir,

We thank Pang⁽¹⁾ for his interest and comments in response to our article.⁽²⁾ We agree that serum carcinoembryonic antigen (CEA) has little value in screening due to its low sensitivity and specificity, and our pilot study also shows this to be so. Our aim is to suggest a management pathway specifically for the subgroup of asymptomatic patients with raised CEA who do get referred to our tertiary colorectal department for further investigation. We would like to reiterate that the patients we have studied are all asymptomatic and “the only reason for their referral was a raised CEA level.” We cannot, at this point, understand the relevance of the suggested matrix to our research topic. We do not seek to demonstrate or compare the CEA level with symptoms and malignancy in this paper.

We thank the writer for his academic contribution, but we feel that it does not address the clinical question of how far we should go in evaluating an asymptomatic patient who has an elevated CEA.

Yours sincerely,

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REFERENCES

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