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**Diagnostic yield from symptomatic gastroscopy in the UK**

Beaton D, Sharp L, Lu L, et al. [Diagnostic yield from symptomatic gastroscopy in the UK: British Society of Gastroenterology analysis using data from the National Endoscopy Database.](https://gut.bmj.com/content/73/9/1421) Gut 2024; 73: 1421-1430. doi: 10.1136/gutjnl-2024-332071.

The study by Beaton et al. discusses the significant challenges faced by UK endoscopy services, which in their current form are struggling to keep up with the high demand for procedures. In the UK diagnosing upper gastrointestinal (GI) cancers late leads to later-stage diagnoses and poorer survival rates compared to neighbouring countries. Data from the UK National Endoscopy Database (NED) was analysed to understand the current use of endoscopy service better.

Analysis of 382,370 gastroscopies, revealed that many procedures were performed on patients under 50, even though serious conditions are relatively rare in this age group. The overall likelihood of detecting cancer was 1.0%, with higher rates observed in older males and those experiencing dysphagia or weight loss combined with another symptom. For Barrett’s oesophagus, the positive predictive value (PPV) was 4.1%, with the highest risk found in older males suffering from reflux. These findings indicate that many current practices result in a high number of low-yield procedures, in particular amongst younger and female patients.

While this study’s strength lies in its use of a large national dataset, it also has limitations, such as missing data from certain sites that do not upload to NED and a reliance on endoscopic findings without histological confirmation. The findings suggest that UK endoscopy services could benefit from refining referral guidelines and improving triage methods to better prioritise high-risk patients. By refining triage to select higher yield procedures, existing resources could be more effectively allocated. This may lead to earlier cancer detection, ultimately improving patient outcomes in the UK.