

Optical diagnosis and image enhancement

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With the assistance of advanced imaging techniques, endoscopists are now able to characterise colorectal polyps with high diagnostic accuracy. This begins with a white light assessment: polyps larger than 2 cm with a large sessile component or a depressed region have the highest risk of containing cancer. Application of advanced imaging techniques can improve diagnostic accuracy further (Figure 9.15). Dye-based chromoendoscopy involves topical application of stains or pigments to improve mucosal characterisation. Several agents have been described, which can broadly be categorised as absorptive (vital) stains, such as methylene blue, and contrast (reactive) stains, such as crystal violet and indigo carmine. These highlight the mucosal pits, which can aid optical diagnosis; different lesions demonstrate specific pit patterns. Dye chromoendoscopy is still widely used and remains the recommended method of dysplasia detection in inflammatory bowel disease. Narrow band imaging (NBI; Olympus) relies on optical filter technology that radically improves the visibility of

(a) and,

capillaries, veins and other subtle tissue structures by optimising the absorbance and scattering characteristics of light. NBI uses two discrete bands of light: one blue at 415 nm and one green at 540 nm. Narrow band blue light displays superficial capillary networks, whereas green light displays subepithelial vessels; when combined they offer an extremely high contrast image of the tissue surface. Similar modalities such as i-Scan (Pentax) and Blue Light Imaging (BLI; Fujifilm) are also available. Dye-based and digital enhancement, particularly when combined with magnification endoscopy, can differentiate between hyperplastic, serrated, adenomatous and malignant pathology. Combining this with a detailed white light assessment allows endoscopists to determine endoscopic resectability, avoiding more extensive surgery in some cases.

(b) (c) Figure 9.15 Endoscopic diagnostic accuracy can be improved by novel endoscopic

techniques. This duodenal adenoma can be seen with conventional white light (a) (arrow), but its full extent is more clearly delineated using narrow band imaging (b) or chromoendoscopy with indigo carmine (c) . (b) Figure 9.16 Colonoscopy is the most appropriate investigation to detect colonic polyps (a) , which can be removed by snare polypec

tomy during the same procedure, leaving a clean polyp base (b) .

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