Choosing Wisely: Brains, Bones, and Bruises

March 2019

Choosing Wisely Canada

Choosing Wisely U.S.

Choosing Wisely Australia

Choosing Wisely U.K.

In 2012 Choosing Wisely was launched in the United States with the goal of advancing dialogue on avoiding wasteful or unnecessary medical tests, treatments, and procedures. Modeled after this campaign, and organized by a team of leading Canadian physicians, Choosing Wisely Canada (CWC) aims to help clinicians and patients engage in conversations about unnecessary tests and treatments, and make smart and effective choices to ensure high-quality care.

Choosing Wisely Canada

Radiology: Five things physicians and patients should question.
1. Don’t do imaging for lower-back pain unless red flags are present.
2. Don't do imaging for minor head trauma unless red flags are present.
3. Don’t do imaging for uncomplicated headache unless red flags are present.
4. Don’t do CT for the evaluation of suspected appendicitis in children until after ultrasound has been considered as an option.
5. Don’t do an ankle x-ray series in adults for minor injuries.

Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation: Six things physicians and patients should question.
2. Don't regularly prescribe bed rest and inactivity following injury and/or illness unless there is scientific evidence that harm will result from activity.
3. Don’t order prescription drugs for pain without considering functional improvement.
4. Don't order CT scans for low back pain unless red flags are present.
6. Don't recommend carpal tunnel release without electrodiagnostic studies to confirm the diagnosis and severity of nerve entrapment.

Sport an Exercise Medicine: Five things physicians and patients should question.
2. Don’t prescribe opiates as first line treatment for tendinopathies.
3. Don’t order orthotics for asymptomatic children with pes planus (flat feet).
4. Don’t order an MRI as an initial investigation for suspected rotator cuff tendinopathy.
5. Don’t immobilize ankle inversion sprains with no evidence of bony or syndesmotic injury.

Occupational Medicine: Five things physicians and patients should question.
1. Don’t endorse clinically unnecessary absence from work.
2. Don’t prescribe opiates for the treatment of acute or chronic non-cancer pain without first assessing side effects, work status, and capacity to drive a motor vehicle.
3. Don’t order x-rays for acute low back pain in the absence of red flags.

Spine. Eight things physicians and patients should question.