

Top POEMs for Choosing Wisely: Another Tool to Help Physicians Practice Good Medicine

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Regular readers of *American Family Physician (AFP)* know of our support of the Choosing Wisely campaign, a program designed to help avoid wasteful or unnecessary medical tests, treatments, and procedures.¹ More than 70 specialty societies participate in this campaign, contributing more than 400 clinical recommendations—most advising clinicians what not to do to reduce harm and improve health. We've featured several editorials about Choosing Wisely²⁻⁴ and created a list of primary care-relevant recommendations and a searchable database on our website (<http://www.aafp.org/afp/recommendations/search.htm>). In many of our articles, we include a table of relevant Choosing Wisely recommendations (for an example, see <http://www.aafp.org/afp/2016/0715/p97.html>). If you haven't explored Choosing Wisely lately, I encourage you to give it a try.

Choosing Wisely is one of several major campaigns combatting overscreening, overdiagnosis, and overtreatment.⁵ In this issue of *AFP*, we feature our newest addition to this effort: a collection of POEMs consistent with the principles of Choosing Wisely.⁶ POEMs (patient-oriented evidence that matters) are studies that address interventions that improve outcomes that matter to a patient's health (e.g., morbidity, mortality, quality of life), as opposed to disease-oriented evidence, which is based on surrogate markers that may or may not affect a patient's well-being (e.g., blood tests, imaging studies, physiologic mechanisms). A similar collection of POEMs was published last year,⁷ and with this installment, we anticipate publishing an annual list in *AFP*. Unlike the actual Choosing Wisely recommendations, some of which are based on expert opinion,⁸ the top POEMs are all based on patient-oriented evidence

showing improved clinical outcomes. In addition, these POEMs were systematically validated by physicians as helping to avoid unnecessary clinical interventions.

If you're looking for concise lists of tips to change clinical practice for the better, I encourage you to consult this list of top POEMs for Choosing Wisely, as well as those in the related annual collections: Top 20 Research Studies for Primary Care Physicians.⁹

EDITOR'S NOTE: Although similar, the article "Top POEMs of 2015 Consistent with the Principles of the Choosing Wisely Campaign" differs somewhat from our annual list of Top 20 Research Studies for Primary Care Physicians.⁹ Both are based on POEMs: in the former case, they are systematically rated for helping to avoid unnecessary clinical interventions; in the latter case, they are systematically rated for relevance to family physicians. There is some overlap between these two lists, and we have published the POEMs in common in an online table that accompanies the article.⁶ Dr. Siwek is editor of *AFP*.

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