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“The top five” list The Italian project for appropriateness in General Practice

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Background & Aim: In the 2012 ABIM Foundation and Consumer Report promoted the project Choosing Wisely with the aim of encouraging dialogue between clinicians and patients on avoiding wasteful or unnecessary medical tests, treatments and procedures . This campaign was launched with the release of “Top five”: many medical specialty societies joined into the project and identified five tests/treatments overused in their contest even if did not provide meaningful benefit for patients.

Method: In 2012 Slow Medicine promoted the same project in Italy: “Doing more doesn’t mean doing better”. The section of Turin of Italian Scientific Society of Family Doctors (SIMG) joined this cause and released the list. A group of family doctors identified five diagnostic tests /treatments very commonly prescribed.

Results: The “Top five” list in Italian General Practice included:

1. Don’t prescribe imaging for low back pain unless red flags are present
2. Don’t routinely prescribe antibiotics for acute upper respiratory tract infections
3. Don’t routinely prescribe protonic pump inhibitors to patients without risk factors for peptic ulcer
4. Don’t prescribe NSAID without initial and periodical evaluation of clinical indication and side effects risk in every patient
5. Don’t routinely prescribe at first benzodiazepines and Z-drugs in elderly for insomnia

Conclusions: Developing appropriate use of medical tests and procedures promotes a better use of the health care resources, assure the correct care and reduces risks for patients. Every item has a synthetic explanation for a proper indication of the procedure and a list of main bibliographic sources. “Doing more doesn’t mean doing better” is a work-in-progress project, SIMG and Slow Medicine created up-to-date courses for doctors to discuss procedures and develop communication skill in doctor-patient relationship.