

General appendix

MISCAN-COLON MODEL OVERVIEW

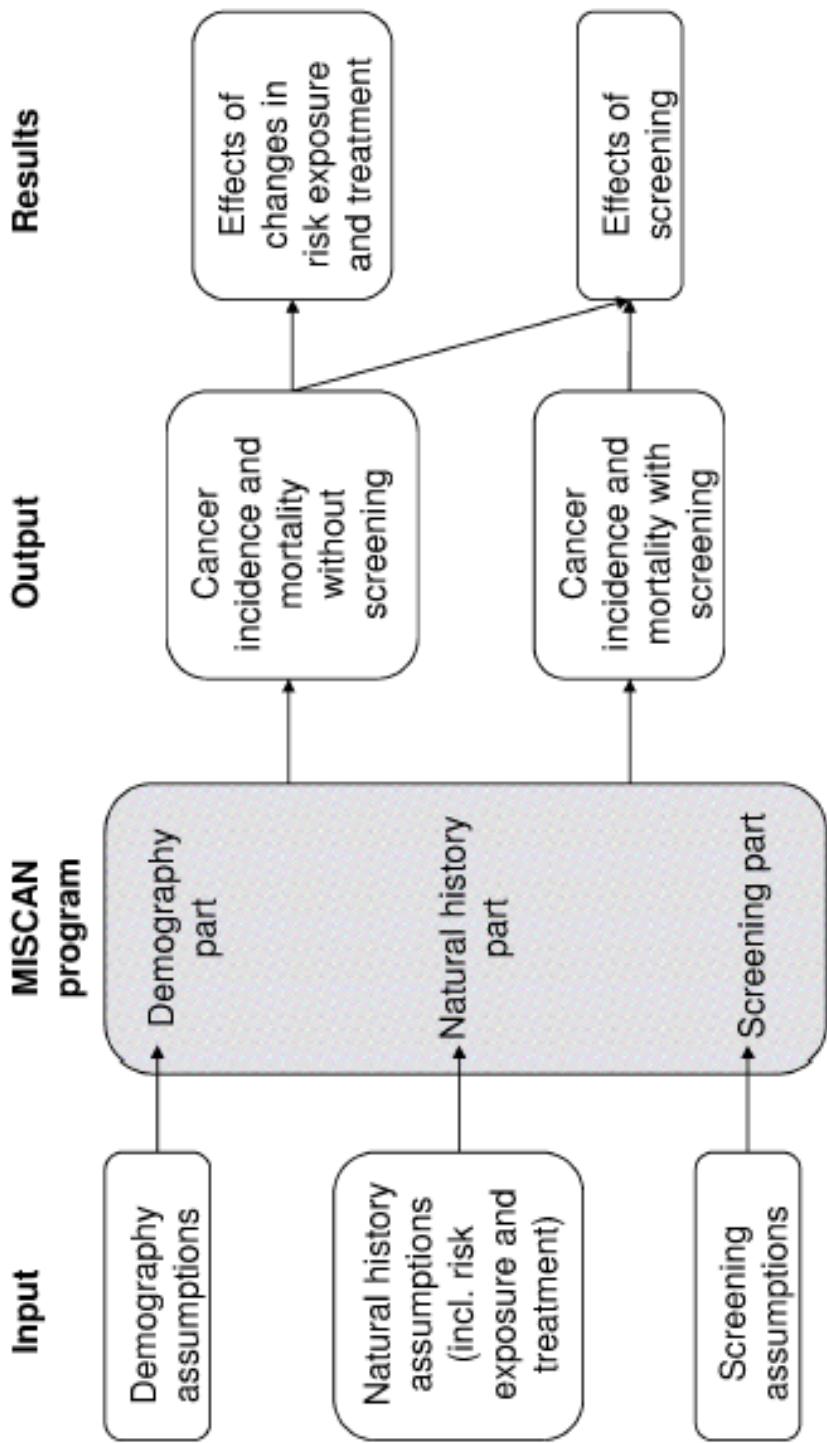
MISCAN-Colon is a stochastic, semi-Markov microsimulation model. In a microsimulation model, individuals are simulated one at a time instead of as proportions of a cohort. The advantage of this is that new events can be dependent on past events of that individual, giving the model a 'memory'. The model is stochastic, which means that sequences of events are simulated by drawing from distributions of probabilities and durations instead of using fixed values. Therefore, the outcomes of the model are subject to random variation. MISCAN uses the Monte Carlo method to simulate all events in the program. Possible events are birth and death of a person, adenoma incidence and transitions from one state of disease to another. MISCAN-Colon consists of three parts (Appendix Figure 1): demography; natural history; and screening part. These parts are not physically separated in the program, but it is useful to consider them separately.

Demography part

MISCAN-Colon first generates a series of individual life histories in the demography part to form a population according to the Demography Parameters. Each person in the population consists of a date of birth and a date of death from other causes than colorectal cancer. These dates are drawn from birth and life tables that are representative for the population under consideration. The maximum age that a person can reach in the model is set to 100 years.

Natural history part

The natural history part of MISCAN-Colon simulates colorectal cancer histories (natural histories) for each individual life history separately. We based our natural history model on the adenoma–carcinoma sequence of Morson and Vogelstein.^{20, 287} This means that adenomas are generated according to a personal risk index and an age specific incidence rate. For each person, a risk index is generated at the beginning of the simulation. Based on the risk index and the age specific incidence rate, the ages at which adenomas develop are generated. This results in no adenomas for most persons and one or more adenomas for others. Some of these adenomas develop into colorectal cancer.

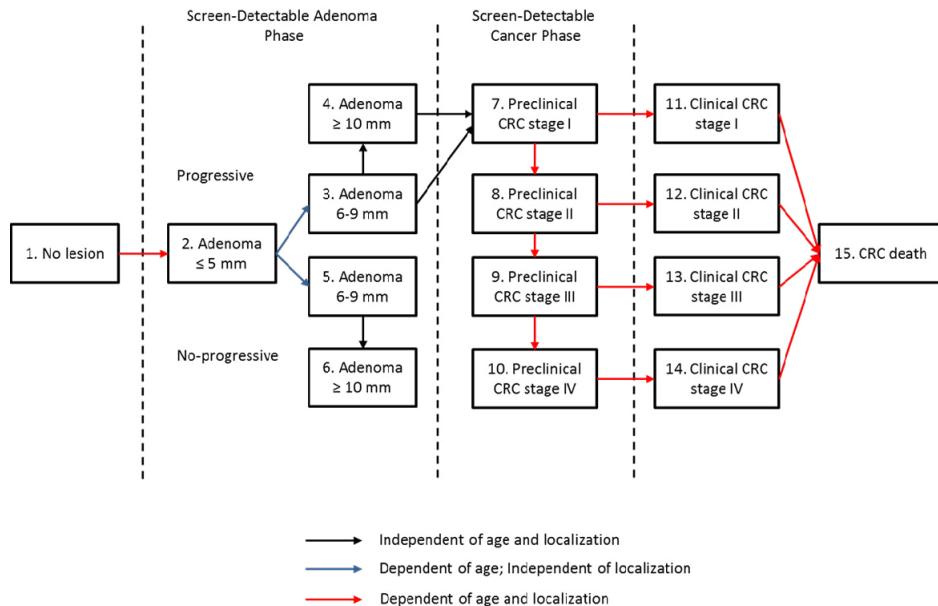


Appendix Figure 1. Structure of MISCAN-Colon

The development from adenoma into cancer covers different stages and depends on the type of adenoma (non–progressive/progressive), the transition probabilities and the duration distribution. During each invasive preclinical stage, a cancer may be clinically detected because of symptoms before it progresses to a higher stage.

The average duration of the preclinical cancer stages and average duration between the adenoma onset and the progression into preclinical cancer (adenoma dwell time) were calibrated using data obtained from randomized, controlled trials (RCTs) evaluating screening^{29, 31, 112, 236, 238} and recently validated using the NORCCAP trial results.¹⁸² In addition, the model assumes: an equal overall dwell time for adenomas to develop into cancer from medium (30% of all CRCs) and from large size adenomas (70% of all CRCs); an exponential distribution for durations in the adenoma and preclinical cancer states; a perfect correlation between durations within adenoma and preclinical cancer states (quicker growing from small adenoma to medium/large adenoma, faster progression into preclinical CRC); and no correlation between durations within adenoma states and duration in the preclinical cancer states.

Adenomas and cancers are modelled to be continuously distributed over the colorectum. The possible transitions between the different states are represented in Appendix Figures 2. Once an adenoma has developed into clinical colorectal cancer, the corresponding survival time is dependent on age-, stage-, and localization-specific survival probabilities based on Cancer Registry data. The life history of each person is altered according to the colorectal cancer histories (natural history) that is simulated for that person. This means that the state a person is in is the same as the state of the most advanced adenoma or carcinoma he has. If he dies from colorectal cancer before he dies from other causes, his death age is adjusted accordingly. This procedure is explained in Appendix Figure 3. In this example the life history of a person is shown who develops two adenomas. One of these adenomas develops into a cancer and causes death before the age of death from other causes. The combination of life history without colorectal cancer and the development of adenomas is shown in the bottom line: combined life history for colorectal cancer.



Appendix Figure 2. Model structure with adenoma-carcinoma sequence for progressive adenomas and non-progressive adenoma sequence

Screening part

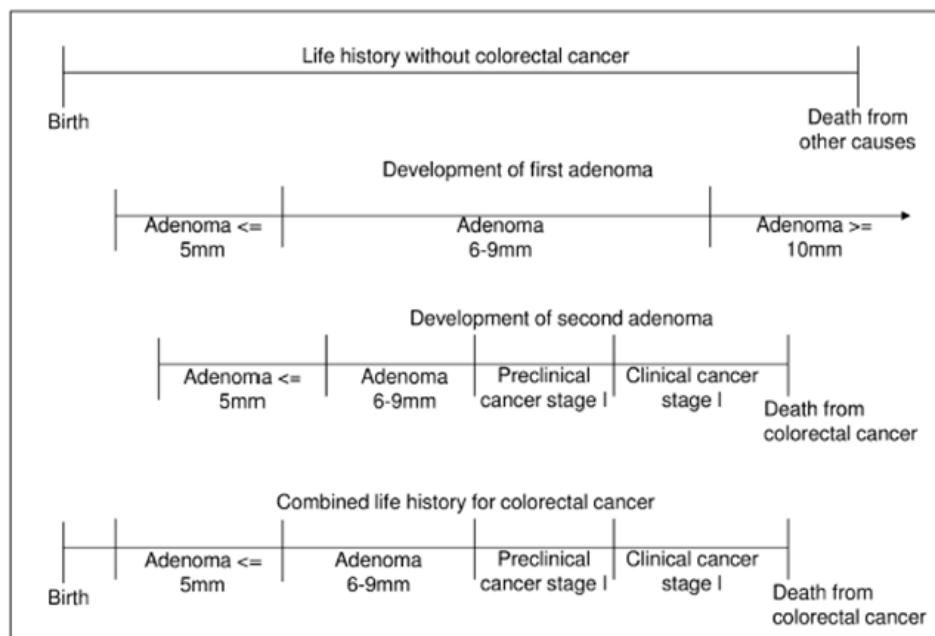
In the third part of the program, screening for colorectal cancer is simulated. After the life history of a person is adjusted for colorectal cancer, the history will now be adjusted for the effects of screening. The screening part is simultaneously run with the natural history part, making detection of adenomas and carcinomas in different states possible. Persons can be invited to participate in screening at specified ages as defined in the screening policy. Depending on the test used and the presence of adenomas and/or carcinomas at the moment of the screening test, there is a probability of a positive test result. Screening may detect all non-invasive adenomas and invasive carcinomas, but individual lesions may also be missed. A positive screening test will result either in removal of an adenoma and preventing CRC or early detection of a preclinical carcinoma, possibly in an earlier stage than when it would have been clinically detected, resulting in a favorable stage shift and potentially improved prognosis. The model also incorporates colonoscopy-related complications,²⁵³ over-diagnosis, and overtreatment.

An example of the effect of screening, screening benefit, or over-diagnosis on the life history of an individual is explained in Appendix Figure 4. In the case of patient A in Appendix Figure 4, the natural history part generates an adenoma. This adenoma progresses into preclinical cancer and is diagnosed at stage II due to symptoms. This patient dies from CRC before its pre-generated date of death of other causes. The red arrow shows the moment that a screening examination is introduced. In this case the adenoma will be detected, removed,

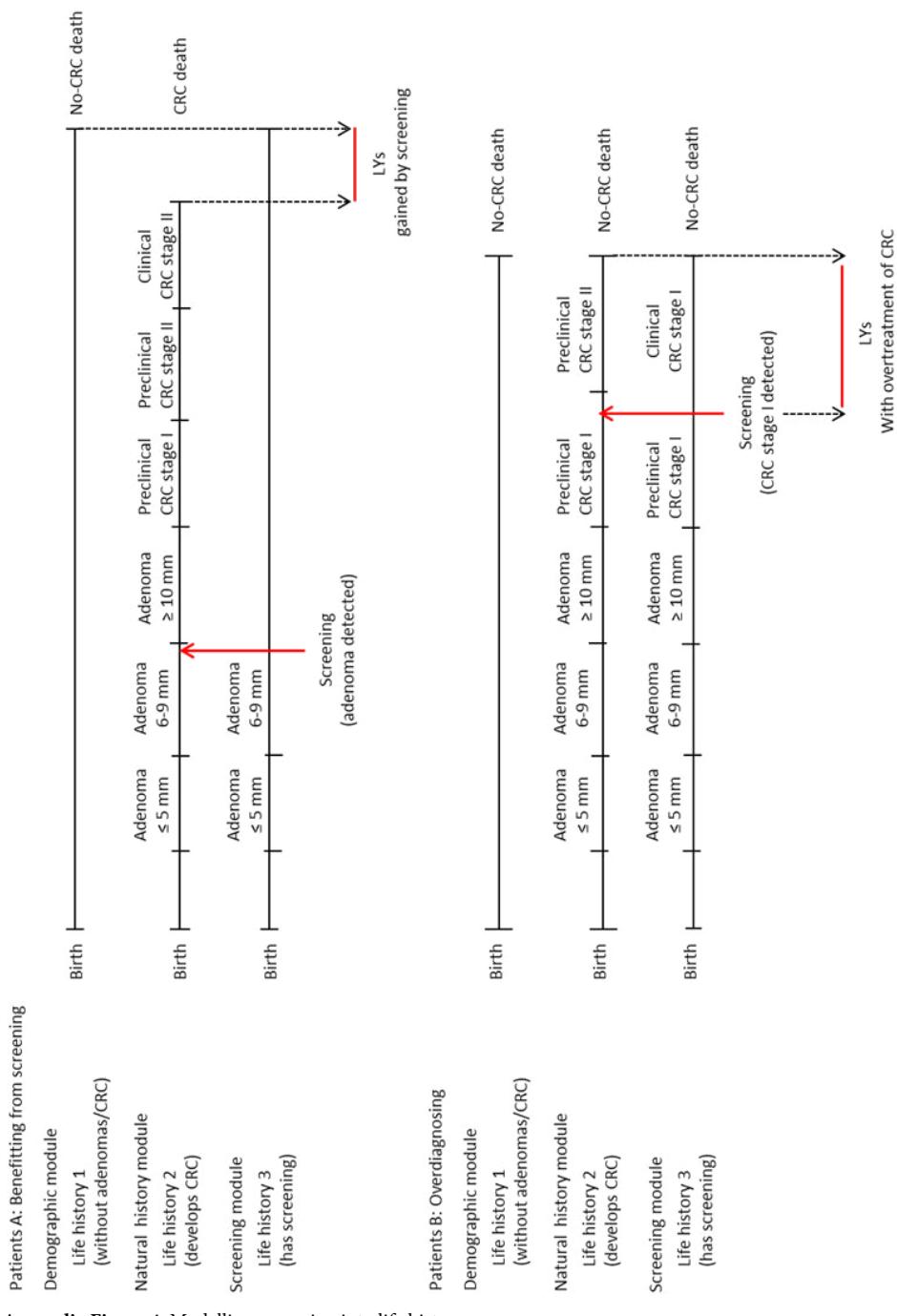
and CRC death is averted. The positive effect of the screening is represented by the red horizontal line, indicating the increase in life years that is gained with the introduction of screening. However, screening might also result in overdiagnosis and overtreatment of CRC (no LYs gained, but only additional LYs with CRC care) as reported in the patient B example.

He develops an adenoma that would never have been diagnosed in a no screening scenario. However, during the screening examination, CRC is detected in stage I, resulting in unnecessary treatment.

Besides, an improvement in survival because of stage-shift (i.e. a cancer diagnosed in an earlier stage with screening than without screening), we also assume the possibility for improved survival because of a shift within stage. This is because, as seen in RCTs on guaiac fecal occult blood testing, stage-specific survival in screen-detected CRC, even after the lead-time bias correction, results more favorable compared to clinically detected CRC.¹⁵⁶ In the model, we assign those screen-detected cancer cases that would have been clinically detected in the same stage a survival corresponding to a cancer that is one stage less progressive. Hence, a cancer screen-detected in stage II that would also have been clinically diagnosed in stage II is assigned the survival of a clinically diagnosed stage I cancer. The only exception is made for the screen-detected stage IV cancer cases: we assigned a survival of clinically diagnosed stage IV CRC in those cases.



Appendix Figure 3. Modelling natural history into life history



Appendix Figure 4. Modelling screening into life history

Model parameters overview

Demography part

1. Number of birth cohorts
2. Proportion of the population in each birth cohort
3. For each birth cohort parameters of its birth table
4. For each birth cohort the parameters of its life table

Natural history part

1. Adenoma-carcinoma sequence states
2. Age specific adenoma incidence rate by birth cohort
3. Parameters for the distribution of the individual risk index
4. Distribution of adenomas over the colorectal sites
5. Probability for adenomas to be progressive
6. Parameters for the transition probability of non-progressive adenomas for each state
7. Parameters for the duration distribution of non-progressive adenomas for each state
8. Parameters for the transition probability of progressive lesions for each state
9. Parameters for the duration distribution of progressive lesions for each state
10. Correlation between duration in subsequent states
11. Parameters for survival after clinical diagnosis by age at diagnosis, year of diagnosis, stage of disease and localization of the cancer.

Screening part

1. Parameters for the dissemination of screening
2. Reach, sensitivity, specificity of different screening tests
3. Dependency of test outcomes on previous test outcomes of the same individual
4. Parameters for survival after screen detected diagnosis
5. Surveillance after screen-detected adenomas

Parameter nature and distinction

The parameters reported in the previous section can be divided into three categories (Appendix Table 1):

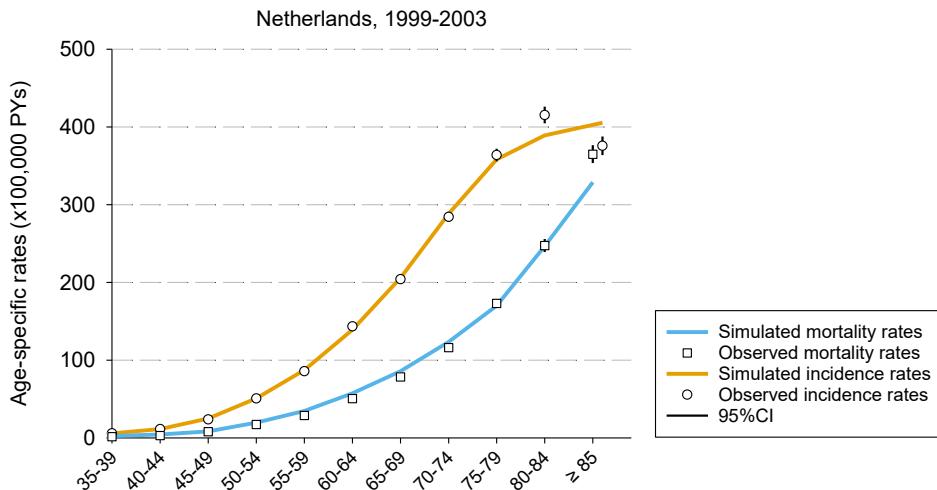
- Parameters that are directly estimated from available data
- Parameters for which no data (or limited data) are available
- Parameters that will be varied to fit reference data

Appendix Table 1. Parameters division

Parameters that are directly estimated from available data	Parameters for which no data (or only limited data are available)	Parameters that will be varied to fit reference data (calibrated)
Demography	Transition probabilities from preclinical non-invasive states	Probability for an adenoma to be progressive
Distribution of lesions over large bowel	Correlation between durations in subsequent states	Individual risk index
Survival after clinical diagnosis	Survival after screen detected diagnosis	Incidence rate of adenomas
Distribution of cancers over invasive stages	-	Duration distribution in preclinical states
Sensitivity, specificity and reach of screening tests	-	Transition probabilities from preclinical invasive states to clinical states
Participation in screening, diagnostic follow-up and surveillance	-	Dependency of test outcomes
Relative risk associated with risk and protective factors	-	-

DUTCH MISCAN-COLON MODEL VERSION

The Dutch version of the MISCAN-Colon model was first calibrated to age- and stage-specific (UICC TNM stage classification) CRC incidence rates observed in the Netherlands in 1999-2003 (Appendix Figure 5).¹⁰⁶ Survival rates were based on data from the South of the Netherlands,¹⁰⁶ since nationwide data were not available. The model parameters not directly observable in epidemiological studies, such as adenoma dwell time and the preclinical duration of CRC, were calibrated replicating outcomes of CRC screening RTCs^{29, 31, 112, 236, 238} and, subsequently, validated to the results of the NORCCAP trial (Chapter 3).¹⁸² The Dutch MISCAN-Colon model version has been used to inform the Dutch FIT CRC screening programme¹⁶⁰ and to assess cost-effectiveness of CRC screening.^{86, 165, 262, 288-290}



Appendix Figure 5. Model predicted and observed colorectal cancer (CRC) incidence and mortality rates in The Netherlands, 1999-2003.

US MISCAN-Colon model version

In the US version of the MISCAN-Colon model, the age-specific probability of adenoma progressivity and the age-, localization-specific transition between preclinical and clinical cancer stages were calibrated to SEER data on age-, stage- and localization-specific incidence of CRC in pre-screening years (i.e., 1975-1979, Appendix Figure 6).³⁶ The personal risk index and the age-specific onset of adenomas were calibrated to adenoma prevalence data obtained in several autopsy studies (Appendix Figure 7).^{36, 114, 129, 131, 134, 244-249} The distribution of adenoma over the colon and rectum was assumed equals to the distribution of cancer cases seen in SEER before the introduction of screening.³⁶ The average duration of the preclinical cancer stages were calibrated according to data obtained from randomized, controlled trials (RCTs) evaluating screening using guaiac fecal occult blood tests.^{29, 31, 238} The average duration between the adenoma onset and the progression into preclinical cancer (adenoma dwell time) was calibrated and validated to the data on interval cancer seen in sigmoidoscopy screenings RCT.²³⁶

The Italian MISCAN-Colon model

We used the IARC cancer incidence in five continents databases (vol. IX, period 1998-2002) to inform and to calibrate the Italian model.⁶³ Cancer registry data from Turin, Milan, Genoa, Florence, and Prato were excluded due to early introduction of population-based screening programmes or pilot studies in those areas.^{91, 92, 181} Stage distribution parameters were calibrated using data from the Cancer Screening National Monitoring reports.²⁹¹ We modelled the age distribution of the Italian population in 1998 using data from the Human Mortality Databases.¹⁰⁵ CRC survival rates were adjusted based on data published by the

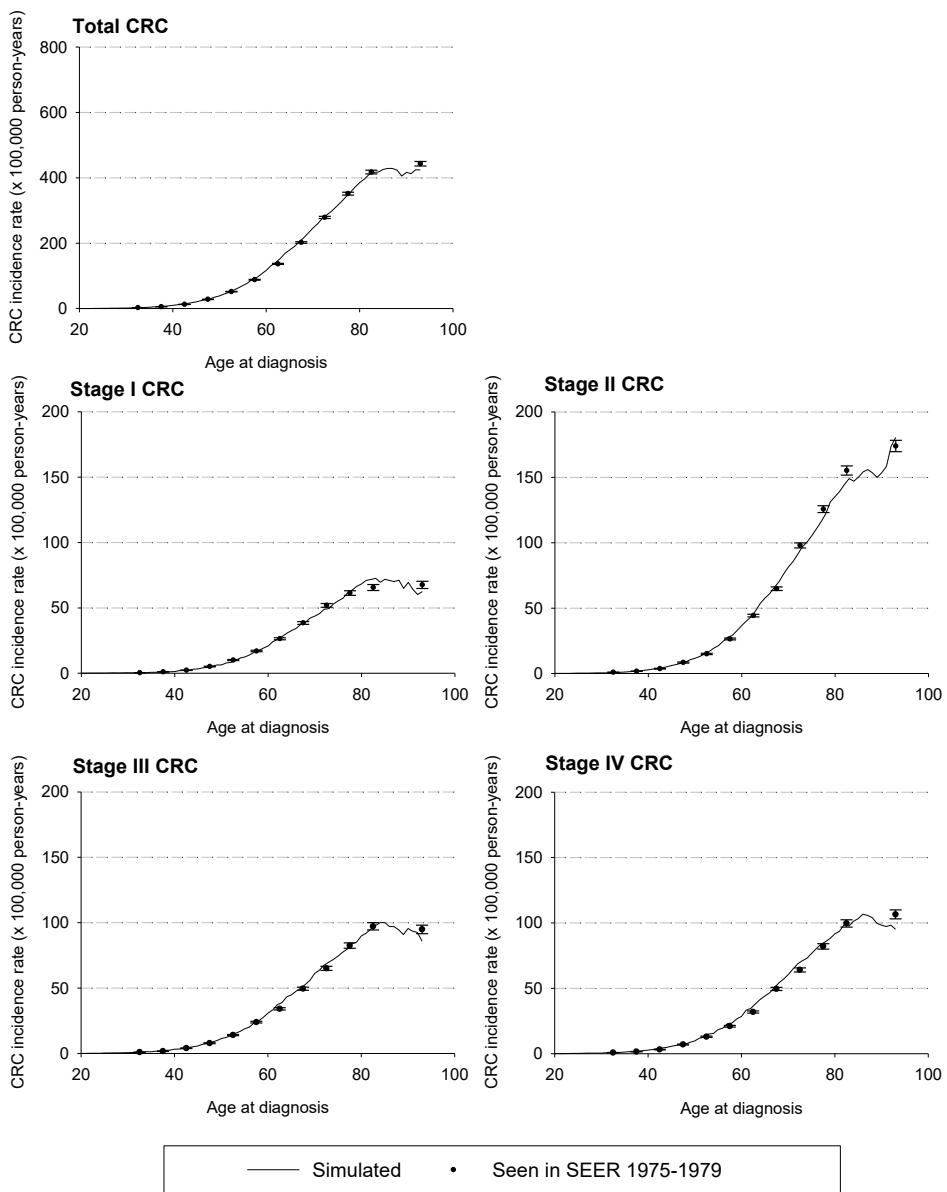
EURO-CARE V project.^{105, 169} The model was used to replicate CRC incidence and mortality rates observed in Italy during the period 1998-2002 and CRC stage distribution in the pre-screening period (internal validation).^{63, 291} Calibration results are reported in Chapter 4.

The Slovenian MISCAN-Colon model

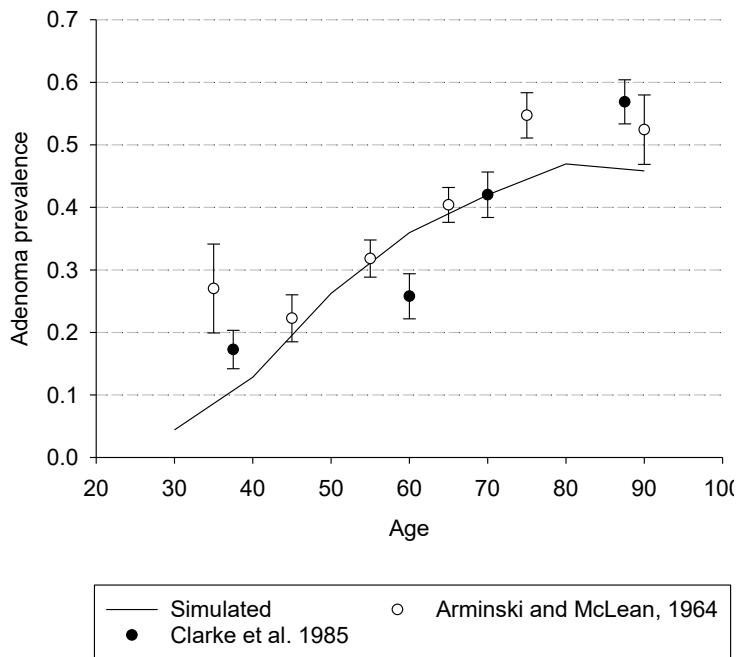
We calibrated the Slovenian model using CRC incidence and stage distribution data from the cancer registry of Slovenia (2004-2008, period before implementation of the FIT organized screening).¹⁵⁶ The model was adjusted to simulate the Slovenian population in 2008 (based on data from the Human Mortality Databases).¹⁰⁵ CRC survival was adjusted using the results of the EURO-CARE V project.^{105, 169} The model was internally validated replicating the CRC incidence rates, mortality rates, and stage distribution observed in Slovenia during 2004-2008.¹⁵⁶ Calibration results are reported in Chapter 4.

The Finnish MISCAN-Colon model

As a population-based screening pilot study investigating effectiveness of gFOBT screening was performed in 2004 in Finland,⁶² we calibrated the Finnish MISCAN-Colon version using CRC incidence and stage distribution data observed in the Finnish Cancer Registry between 1999 and 2003.²⁹² However, CRC stage distribution data was converted before performing the model calibration due to the different CRC staging classification (not conform the UICC TNM stage classification). The conversion was performed as follows: Localized CRCs were assumed for 1/3 as TNM stage I and for 2/3 as TNM stage II (based on the CRC stage proportions observed in The Netherlands, Italy and Slovenia); regional (CRCs non-localized, only regional lymph node metastases or with no information on extent) as TNM stage III; and distant (CRCs metastasized further than regional lymph nodes) as TNM stage IV. We used the model to simulate the 1999 age-specific Finnish population based on data from the Human Mortality Databases.¹⁰⁵ Survival rates after CRC diagnosis were adjusted based on data published by the EURO-CARE V project.^{105, 169} The model was used to replicate CRC incidence rates, mortality rates, and CRC stage distribution observed in Finland in the pre-screening period (1999-2003, internal validation).²⁹² Calibration results are reported in Chapter 4.



Appendix Figure 6. Colorectal cancer incidence seen before the introduction of screening versus incidence simulated by Microsimulation Screening Analysis-Colon model.



Appendix Figure 7. Adenoma prevalence seen in selected autopsy studies versus prevalence simulated by Microsimulation Screening Analysis-Colon model. Observed results are shown only for the 2 largest studies on which the model has been calibrated. The model has additionally been calibrated to 8 other autopsy studies. Bars indicate 95% CIs.

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