

RESOLUTION 08.2022-13 (A-23)
COLONICS, COLONIC IRRIGATION AND COLONIC HYDROTHERAPY

ISMS Board Action Taken on 01/28/2023

Adopted Substitute Resolution 08.2022-13 (A-23) in lieu of Resolution 08.2022-13 (A-23), as recommended by the Council on Medical Service.

Council on Medical Service Recommendation to ISMS Board on 01/28/2023

The Council heard from the resolution’s author at the previous meeting, and asked for revisions to the resolution after concerns were raised about patient confusion over the health or medicinal value of colonic irrigation or colonic hydrotherapy, and the need for any policy to be consistent with and inclusive of established evidence and practice guidelines. The author provided a substitute resolution for the Council’s consideration. The Council had concerns with calling the procedure the “practice of medicine” while also classifying it as a cosmetic procedure. The Council discussed instances when colonics are used in a hospital setting, as a type of medicine. Overall, the Council was supportive, and thus recommends adoption of the substitute resolution.

The Council on Medical Service recommends that the ISMS Board of Trustees adopt Substitute Resolution 08.2022-13 (A-23), in lieu of Resolution 08.2022-13 (A-23):

RESOLVED, that it is the policy of the Illinois State Medical Society (ISMS) that there is no scientific evidence that the provision of colonics, colonic irrigation and colonic hydrotherapy demonstrate any health benefit, and that there are significant risks associated with these procedures that can lead to numerous medical complications; and be it further

RESOLVED, that ISMS advocate with IDFPR that the provision of colonics, colonic irrigation and colonic hydrotherapy are an invasive manipulation of internal colon contents and fluid dynamics without a known or proven health benefit or medical indication, and that the performance of such should be designated in the category of an unproven cosmetic action with potential life-threatening medical complications; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the ISMS advocate that the Illinois Attorney General’s Consumer Protection Division request that businesses or individuals providing colonics, colonic irrigation and/or colonic hydrotherapy obtain from their customers a signed consent form prior to the procedure acknowledging that: a.) there is no medical indication or scientific study that supports the claim that there is any health benefit to the procedure or that the procedure will detoxify the body or rid the colon of toxins; and,

42 b.) the procedure has risks that include but are not limited to: cramping, abdominal pain,
43 nausea, vomiting, dehydration, perianal irritation, rectal tear, infection, altered
44 electrolyte and fluid balance, heart failure, altered balance of intestinal flora, overgrowth
45 of harmful colon flora, parasitic infections, abscesses, kidney insufficiency, pancreatitis
46 and death; and be it further

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48 RESOLVED, that ISMS advocate that the Illinois Department of Public Health
49 (IDPH) require that providers of colonics, colonic irrigation and colonic hydrotherapy
50 obtain for each individual undergoing the action a prescription from a physician for the
51 intended action; and be it further

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53 RESOLVED, that the ISMS advocate for legislation that would empower the
54 IDPH to regulate businesses performing colonics, colonic irrigation and colonic
55 hydrotherapy, to ensure patient safety and to prevent unnecessary and potentially
56 harmful outcomes based on unfounded claims of any medical or other health benefits of
57 such procedures.