

LESS IS MORE! NATIONAL WASTE ASSESSMENT AND A NOVEL WASTE REDUCTION STRATEGY BASED ON A PROSPECTIVE MULTICENTRE STUDY IN GERMANY

Maximilian Schneider

UEG Week Berlin 2025

Poster

October 7, 2025

A prospective German multicentre study found that gastrointestinal endoscopies generate 1119 g of waste per procedure, with office-based procedures producing significantly less waste than hospital-based equivalents and 23% of waste potentially recyclable.

KEY POINTS

- Office-based endoscopic procedures generated 47-69% less solid waste than equivalent hospital-based procedures across EGD, colonoscopy, their combination, and sigmoidoscopy (all $p < 0.001$).
- Combining consecutive procedures could reduce waste by up to 39% for EGD and colonoscopy and 33% for EUS and ERCP, while replacing single-use gowns with reusable ones could reduce PPE waste by 54%.
- Suction bag waste accounted for 35% of waste per procedure and could be processed via sewage systems rather than disposed of as solid waste.
- Extrapolated nationally, German gastrointestinal endoscopies generate 8024 tonnes of waste annually, equivalent to 18533 citizens' annual waste and 3924 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions.
- Recycling 23% of endoscopic waste could reduce annual waste by the equivalent of 3616 citizens and prevent 1427 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions, suggesting significant environmental benefit from implementing waste reduction strategies in endoscopic practices.

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