



ACS Updates Breast Cancer Screening Guidelines but still supports annual mammography beginning at age 40

The American Cancer Society (ACS) updated their breast cancer screening recommendations for women at average risk of breast cancer. Mammography can reduce, by about 20 percent, a woman's risk of dying from breast cancer. But when it comes to when to start and how often to screen, many experts say there is no one answer that suits all women. Breast cancer risk increases with age and studies have shown that older women tend to be diagnosed with less aggressive breast cancers.

In recognition of this fact, the ACS changed their screening guidelines and they are now recommending the following:

- Women with an average risk of breast cancer should undergo regular screening mammography starting at age 45
- Women age 45-54 years should be screened annually
- Women age 55 and older can transition to an every-other-year mammography schedule but yearly/annual mammography should remain available women after age 55

“Although these guidelines recommend initiating mammography screening at a later age, ACS is **still** supporting the availability of annual screening mammography for average-risk women beginning at age 40” said Lisa Newman, MD, MPH, FACS, with the Comprehensive Cancer Center at University of Michigan and Chair of the Michigan Cancer Consortium Breast Cancer Advisory Committee. She adds, “The Michigan Cancer Consortium currently recommends annual mammography beginning at age 40.”

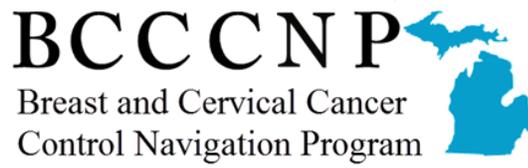
Other changes in the ACS recommendation include no longer requiring clinical breast exams by a health provider for average risk women.

Dr. Newman states that “Women must remain aware of their general breast health and seek prompt medical attention if they notice any changes such as a new lump, bloody nipple discharge or inflammatory skin changes, regardless of when the most recent mammogram was performed.”

Women and their health care providers should discuss together breast cancer screening and when to be screened. Women should also know their family health history and share this with their provider as this will help providers assess the risk for developing breast cancer and make screening recommendations based on the woman's individual risk.

Among Michigan women, breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer deaths and is the most frequently diagnosed cancer. The American Cancer Society estimates that 7,780 Michigan women will be diagnosed with breast cancer and 1,410 women in the state will die of the disease in 2015.





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If you cannot afford a mammogram, or need assistance in scheduling your mammogram, you may qualify for the Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Navigation Program (BCCCNP). The BCCCNP provides free breast and cervical cancer screening and diagnostic services to low-income women between the ages of 40-64 and also assists insured women in scheduling mammograms if needed. For more information about the BCCCNP, please call 800-922-6266 or visit www.michigancancer.org/bcccp.

In Southwest Michigan BCCCNP is available by calling 1-888-AGE-40up, 1-888-243-4087.

To learn more about the MCC and review its Breast Cancer Guidelines, please visit www.michigancancer.org.



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