

Change in mammography guidelines questioned

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The methodology and evidence behind a widely publicized change in national mammography guidelines is questionable, according to a review in the *Journal of Diagnostic Medical Sonography* (JDMS), published by SAGE.

In November 2009, the US Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) published a report in the *Annals of Internal Medicine* discussing the screening techniques for the early detection of [breast cancer](#). A few isolated portions of that report, regarding recommended changes for the use of [mammography](#), were widely discussed in the media, and garnered tremendous public attention.

This new JDMS article provides an evidenced-based review of the work and recommendations contained in the USPSTF report and raises the question whether the controversial conclusions for [breast cancer screening](#) were supported by established scientific measurement and research standards. The JDMS review found low methodological scores in the USPSTF report, which may place in question the recommendations generated from the report.

The article concludes that, despite the report's depiction as a systematic review, the USPSTF report was actually just a review of literature, which reduces the overall scientific impact of the report to a much lower level in the hierarchy of evidence.

"Even though the methodology used by the USPSTF is not clear and the

level of evidence is questionable, the proposed recommendations have been highly publicized." writes author Kevin D. Evans. "The most appropriate way to guarantee patients are receiving quality health care is to become adept at reviewing published research and implementing information that will change current practice patterns."

More information: The article "Review of the US Preventive Services Task Force's Statement on Screening for Breast Cancer" in *Journal of Diagnostic Medical Sonography* is available free for a limited time at jdm.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/26/1/19 .

Provided by SAGE Publications

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