

ARRS: Women overestimate radiation risk from mammogram

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(HealthDay)—Women tend to overestimate the radiation risk associated with mammography, according to a study presented at the annual meeting of the American Roentgen Ray Society, held from May 4 to 9 in San Diego.

Jacqueline Hollada, from the University of California in Los Angeles, and colleagues surveyed 133 women presenting for annual mammography during a three-month period to ascertain their knowledge of the ionizing radiation associated with breast imaging. Participants were asked to rate the amount of radiation in a single mammogram relative to a series of radiation benchmarks. Five benchmarks were chosen to provide an approximately logarithmic scale with the value of a mammogram at the center (0.4 mSv). The benchmarks were ranked according to radiation, with 1 the highest and 6 the lowest.

The researchers found that none of the 78 women who responded to the benchmark question ranked all six radiation benchmarks correctly. Women overestimated the radiation associated with a mammogram compared with the other benchmarks. The correct rank for mammogram was 3.5, which was significantly different from the average rank given of 2.9 (standard deviation, 1.2; P

"Using everyday sources of [radiation exposure](#) as benchmarks can help add perspective and improve patients' understanding of [radiation](#) levels associated with mammography, thereby reducing anxiety related to the examination," Hollada said in a statement.

More information: [Abstract](#)
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