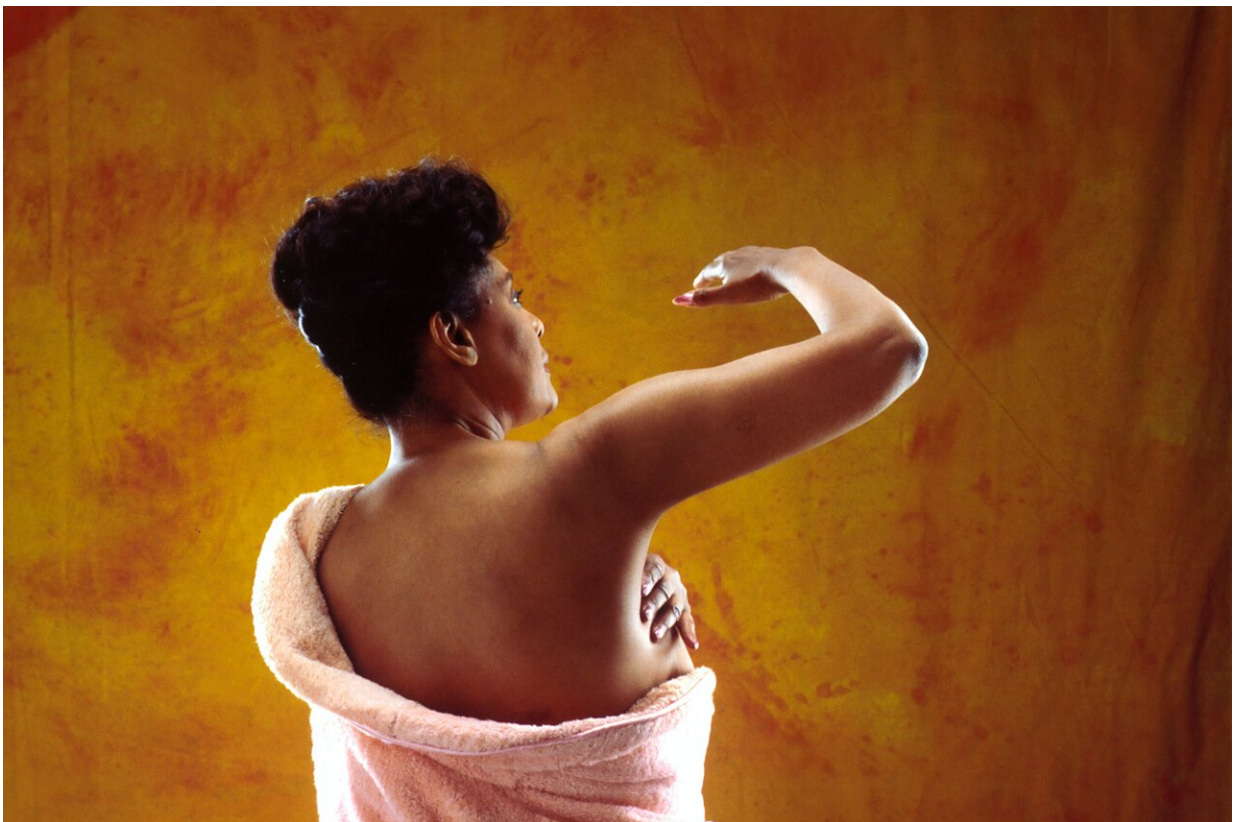


Study: Women's reactions to states' breast density information varies by sociodemographic characteristics

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Breast density information aims to increase awareness of breast density and its risks and inform future breast screening decisions.

A new study by researchers from Boston University Chobanian & Avedisian School of Medicine among a diverse group of women has found that reactions vary significantly by socio-demographics; non-Hispanic Black, Asian and Hispanic women, and women with low literacy were nearly two-to-three times more likely to report anxiety than non-Hispanic white women.

"Understanding how different groups of women respond to breast density information is essential in ensuring that its provision does not inadvertently exacerbate inequities in breast cancer outcomes by deterring some from undergoing future mammographic screening," said corresponding author Nancy Kressin, Ph.D., professor of medicine.

The researchers surveyed a large, diverse sample of American women by telephone about their reactions to receiving breast density information and their plans for future mammographic screening and examined how they related to women's race/ethnicity and literacy levels.

While most women (86%) felt informed after receiving personal breast density information, some felt anxious (15%) or confused (11%), but women of color and those with low literacy were more likely to report feeling anxious or confused and were less likely to feel informed.

Specifically, non-Hispanic Black and Asian women were nearly twice as likely to report that knowing their breast density made them more likely to have future mammograms. Some women with low literacy were less likely to plan for future mammograms, while others were more likely to do so.

According to the researchers, while the majority of women indicated that knowing their [breast density](#) would not change their future mammography plans, the fact that some women with low [literacy](#) were more than three times less likely to plan to have their next mammogram

is especially concerning.

"Given that 20% of the adult US population reads below a 5th grade level, this association could negatively affect mammographic usage among a substantial proportion of people with breasts, many of whom fall within vulnerable populations with substantial inequities in breast cancer outcomes," adds Kressin.

These findings appear online in the journal *Women's Health Issues*.

More information: Nancy R. Kressin et al, Women's Reactions to Breast Density Information Vary by Sociodemographic Characteristics, *Women's Health Issues* (2023). [DOI: 10.1016/j.whi.2023.03.002](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.whi.2023.03.002)

Provided by Boston University School of Medicine

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