

Pandemic had temporary negative effect on breast cancer screening

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The COVID-19 pandemic had a transient negative effect on breast cancer screening overall and a prolonged negative effect on follow-up screening, according to a [study published](#) in the May/June issue of the *Annals of Family Medicine*.

Andrew Chung, from Pennsylvania State University in University Park,

and colleagues evaluated the pandemic's impact on overall and follow-up breast cancer screening using real-world health records data from the TriNetX Research Network. The analysis included 1.19 million women eligible for breast cancer screening from Jan. 1, 2017, to Feb. 28, 2022.

The researchers found that the monthly screening volume temporarily decreased by 80.6 percent from February to April 2020 and then rebounded to close to pre-COVID levels by June 2020. The follow-up screening rate decreased from 78.9 percent in the pre-COVID period to 77.7 percent in the COVID period.

The COVID period also had a lower adherence to follow-up screening (odds ratio, 0.86), with a greater pandemic impact among women aged 65 years and older and women of non-Hispanic "other" race (Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander).

"As [health systems](#) around the world start to recover from the disruptions in essential health services after three years of the pandemic, innovative care navigation strategies, such as focused [outreach efforts](#), are needed to close the gap and improve the stagnant [breast cancer screening](#) rate, adherence rate, and outcomes," the authors write.

More information: Andrew Chung et al, Breast Cancer Screening During the COVID-19 Pandemic in the United States: Results From Real-World Health Records Data, *The Annals of Family Medicine* (2024). [DOI: 10.1370/afm.3098](https://doi.org/10.1370/afm.3098)

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