

Research shows some women in their 40s prefer to delay breast cancer screening

July 16 2024, by Elana Gotkine



A considerable proportion of women aged 39 to 49 years prefer to delay breast cancer screening, especially after a decision aid (DA) intervention, according to a study [published](#) online July 16 in the *Annals*

of Internal Medicine.

Laura D. Scherer, Ph.D., from the University of Colorado School of Medicine in Aurora, and colleagues examined [breast cancer screening](#) preferences among women aged 39 to 49 years in a pre-post survey with a breast cancer screening decision aid (DA) intervention. The analyses included 495 women without a history of breast cancer or known BRCA1/2 gene mutation.

The researchers found that 27.0 percent of participants preferred to delay screening (versus having a [mammography](#) at their current age) before viewing the DA compared with 38.5 percent after the DA. The number never wanting mammography did not increase (5.4 percent before the DA versus 4.3 percent after).

The risk for breast cancer was lower for participants who preferred to delay screening than those who preferred not to delay. Overall, 37.4 percent of participants reported that the information about over-diagnosis was surprising compared with 27.2 and 22.9 percent for information about false-positive results and screening benefits, respectively.

"These data emphasize the importance of reducing barriers to receiving desired care as well as informing [women](#) about mammography benefits, harms, and personal cancer risk estimates as a regular part of [screening](#) consultations," the authors write.

More information: Laura D. Scherer et al, Mammography Screening Preferences Among Screening-Eligible Women in Their 40s, *Annals of Internal Medicine* (2024). [DOI: 10.7326/M23-3325](https://doi.org/10.7326/M23-3325)

Victoria Mintsopoulos et al, Informing Informed Decision Making: Balancing the Benefits and Harms of Breast Cancer Screening, *Annals of*

Internal Medicine (2024). [DOI: 10.7326/M24-0885](https://doi.org/10.7326/M24-0885)

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Citation: Research shows some women in their 40s prefer to delay breast cancer screening (2024, July 16) retrieved 16 July 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2024-07-women-40s-delay-breast-cancer.html>

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