



Not Just Once

The Bimonthly Newsletter of CMS's National Medicare Mammography Campaign

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WELCOME!

Breast cancer screening – and the value of mammography – has been in the news recently. In this issue, we report the U. S. Preventive Services Task Force announcement recommending screening mammography for women age 40 and over (page 2) and the National Cancer Institute’s reaffirmation of its mammography recommendations (page 3).

Continuing our commitment to promote breast cancer screening, we are pleased to announce that the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has joined a major public-private educational campaign. In February, the National Breast Cancer Awareness Month (NBCAM) Board of Sponsors voted to add CMS as a member. CMS joins sister agencies, the National Cancer Institute and the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, on the Board. For more information about NBCAM, see page 3.

As always, we encourage you to send us feedback and ideas for future articles. Please contact Newsletter Editor Maribeth Fonner at (816) 426-5039 or mfonner@cms.hhs.gov. We are still eager to receive your completed Newsletter evaluation forms. The form was in the January-February issue, and will remain posted on our website for another month. These can be faxed to (816) 426-5525 or e-mailed to mfonner@cms.hhs.gov

Sincerely,

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HHS Affirms Value of Mammography for Detecting Breast Cancer

Thursday February 21, 2002 – U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) Secretary Tommy G. Thompson today announced an updated recommendation from the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) that calls for screening mammography, with or without clinical breast examination, every one to two years for women ages 40 and over. This recommendation affirms HHS' existing position on the value of mammography.

"The federal government makes a clear recommendation to women on mammography: If you are 40 or older, get screened for breast cancer with mammography every one to two years," Secretary Thompson said. "While developing technology certainly holds the promise for new detection and treatment methods, mammography remains a strong and important tool in the early detection of breast cancer. The early detection of breast cancer can save lives."

The USPSTF published two earlier breast cancer screening recommendations, in 1989 and 1996, that both endorsed mammography for women over age 50. The USPSTF is now extending that recommendation to all women over age 40, but found that the strongest evidence of benefit and reduced mortality from breast cancer is among women ages 50-69. The recommendation acknowledges that there are some risks associated with mammography (false-positive results that lead to unnecessary biopsies or surgery), but that these risks lessen as women get older.

The National Cancer Institute (NCI) has also reaffirmed its support for mammography. "Early detection of cancer saves lives and we continue to recommend mammography for women in their 40s and older," said Andrew von Eschenbach, MD, director of the NCI. "While we seek improved methods of diagnosis and treatment of breast cancer, today mammography remains an important part of our effort to save lives through early detection."

Breast cancer is the most common cancer among women in the United States. In 2001, an estimated 192,200 women were diagnosed with breast cancer, and 40,600 women died from the disease.

In addition to age, other factors may increase a woman's risk of breast cancer. The strongest risk factors are a family history of breast cancer in a mother or sister, having already been diagnosed with breast cancer, or having had a previous breast biopsy showing atypical hyperplasia (an irregular pattern of cell growth).

"Mammography is an important tool for detecting breast cancer," said Janet Allan, PhD, RN, vice chair of the USPSTF. "Clinicians and women should discuss individual risk factors to determine when to have a first mammogram and how often to have them after that."

Today's USPSTF recommendation results largely from the review of eight randomized controlled trials of mammography (four of mammography alone and four of mammography plus clinical breast examination) that

have reported results with 11 to 20 years of follow up. These studies have all been published since the task force last addressed this issue in 1996.

The USPSTF also noted that there remains insufficient evidence to recommend for or against routine clinical breast examination alone as a screening tool for breast cancer and insufficient evidence to recommend for or against routinely teaching or performing routine breast self-examination. While these techniques detect some additional cancers, there were not enough data to determine whether they reduced deaths from breast cancer.

The USPSTF, the leading independent panel of private-sector experts in prevention and primary care, is sponsored by HHS' Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) and conducts rigorous, impartial assessments of scientific evidence for a broad range of preventive services. The breast cancer screening recommendation and materials for clinicians and patients are available on the Web at <http://www.ahrq.gov/clinic/3rduspstf/breastcancer/> or by calling AHRQ's toll-free information clearinghouse at 1-800-358-9295.

A webcast of the HHS announcement press conference is available from kaisernetwork.org, a free service of the Kaiser Family Foundation, at <http://www.kaisernetwork.org/healthcast/hhs/21feb02>

NCI Statement on Mammography Screening

Thursday January 31, 2002 – A recent report in the scientific literature has reawakened debate about the value of screening mammograms. The analysis, which appeared in *The Lancet* on October 20, 2001, reviewed the large, long-term mammography trials upon which the National Cancer Institute (NCI) and other groups have based their recommendations and guidelines concerning mammography screening. This review cited a number of possible flaws in the conduct of the trials and the methods used to analyze the data.

The NCI has carefully considered the issues raised in *The Lancet* review. It has also considered the recent deliberations of the PDQ Screening and Prevention Editorial Board and of the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force and has consulted with a variety of experts in the field in order to determine whether a change in its position is warranted.

After due consideration, NCI continues to recommend that:

- Women in their 40s should be screened every one to two years with mammography.
- Women aged 50 and older should be screened every one to two years.
- Women who are at higher than average risk of breast cancer should seek expert medical advice about whether they should begin screening before age 40 and the frequency of screening.

At the same time, NCI is determined to continue to address the uncertainties in the analysis of complex information surrounding screening mammograms. One of its highest priorities will be the monitoring and evaluation of new data on mammography from numerous studies now underway which will supplement the data from clinical trials.

Most important, NCI is strongly committed to further research on early detection of breast cancer. “It is absolutely essential to look beyond the debate over the limitations of current data and to accelerate the development of better screening tools,” said NCI director Andrew von Eschenbach, MD. “While we will continue to be vigilant in reviewing data on mammography, we must emphasize research to develop more effective screening tools and strategies that hold promise for improved detection of breast cancer and, ultimately, for saving lives.”

Editor’s Note: This statement was updated February 21, 2002, to reference the HHS Press Release [reprinted opposite] and the USPSTF Recommendation.

National Breast Cancer Awareness Month: Celebrating Over 16 Years of Progress

National Breast Cancer Awareness Month (NBCAM) is dedicated to increasing awareness of breast cancer issues, especially the importance of early detection. It works through a nationwide education campaign aimed at the general public, state and federal governments, healthcare professionals, employers and women of all ages and ethnic groups.

The first NBCAM program took place in October 1985 as a week-long

event to fill the information void in public communication about breast cancer. The two founding members of the Board of Sponsors, the American Academy of Family Physicians and Cancer Care, Inc., distributed brochures, spoke to news reporters, and testified before a U. S. Congressional committee about the crucial need for widespread access to mammography.

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NBCAM

NATIONAL BREAST CANCER
AWARENESS MONTH

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Former First Lady Betty Ford, a breast cancer survivor and one of the first public figures to speak out about the disease, joined her daughter Susan Ford Bales in a televised emotional appeal to call attention to the importance of screening. Soon after, other public figures, industry executives, community leaders, members of the media, nonprofit organizations, and many individual women further galvanized national public interest.

Today, the Board of Sponsors comprises 18 national public service organizations, professional medical associations, and government agencies – including the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services and the National Cancer Institute. The Board represents:

- more than 235,000 physicians, nurses
- 800 local volunteer/advocacy chapters serving more than three million women
- 50 state health agencies
- more than 300 mayoral offices
- 100,000 public volunteers

Members of the NBCAM Board of Sponsors work in partnership to raise awareness and provide access to screening services.

More information about NBCAM is available on the website, <http://www.nbcam.org>

Source: www.nbcam.org/about.cfm

National Breast Cancer Awareness Month (NBCAM)

21st Century Mission

- Encourage repeat screening
- Increase mammography rates for older women, Hispanic women, Native American women, Alaska Native women and women below poverty level
- Make coverage of mammograms by health insurers mandatory
- Increase the enrollment of women with breast cancer in clinical trials

To read back issues of the **Not Just Once** Newsletter, please visit the website: <http://www.hcfa.gov/quality/3n1.htm>



CMS's Regional Mammography Coordinators

CMS's Regional Mammography Coordinators are a wonderful resource for partners working on breast cancer projects geared to older women. We encourage you to make contact with our coordinators listed below and learn more about how we can be of assistance to you.

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lmatos@cms.hhs.gov



Order Form - Mammograms NCI/CMS Materials



Name:		Title:		
Organization:		Phone:		
Address:		Email:		
City:	State:	Zip Code:		
Title & Contents Description	Language	Inventory Number	Size	Quantity
Mammograms... Not Just Once, But for a Lifetime Large-print, easy to read brochure that defines mammography, describes who needs to be screened, and Medicare information. (maximum order 5000)	English Spanish	H496 H497	8½ x 11	
Mammograms for Older Women Poster Includes slogan with Medicare information. A poster featuring an older woman, available for display in health care settings. (minimum order: 20, maximum 5000)	English Spanish	G500 G501	11 x 17	
Mammograms for Older Women Bookmark Includes slogan with Medicare information. Bookmark features an older woman with facts in breast cancer, mammography, and Medicare coverage. (maximum order 5000)	English Spanish	Z498 Z499	2 x 8	
Over 40? Consider Mammograms Poster Set of 5 posters, each featuring a woman from a special population.	English	G438		
Ad Slicks Camera-ready ads in a variety of sizes featuring older women. Includes slogan with Medicare information.	English	C135		
Knowledge & Behavior of Women Ages 65 and Older on Mammography Screening & Medicare 25-page bound report with findings from a telephone survey conducted in Spring of 1999. (Limited quantities available)	English	T162		
Breast & Cervical Cancer Programs in Your Community: A Guide for Outreach, Screening, and Follow-up Care This 205-page guide addresses program planning; establishing partnerships; outreach and education; coordination of screening, diagnostic, and treatment services; payment and health care delivery systems and more.	English	T408		
Spread the Word About Mammograms and the Pap Test: An Educational Resource for Health Care Professionals These flip charts illustrate key concepts to help women understand the importance of early cancer detection. The presentations are for medically underserved women and are meant for small groups – no larger than 10.	English Spanish	G444 G445		
Why Get Mammograms? A pad for physicians that includes fifty-tear off fact sheets on mammograms for patients. Includes NCI's recommendations, risk factors for breast cancer, and the benefits and limitations of mammography.	English	Z448		

Mail order form to:
 National Cancer Institute
 P.O. Box 24128
 Baltimore, MD 21227

OR

Fax order form to:
 410-646-3117

Receipt of your order will be confirmed by fax or email.