



Cases increasing, but long-term effects of pandemic still unclear

Researchers want to know if the suspension of breast cancer screenings during the pandemic has affected late-stage diagnoses.

More than three years on from the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, when mammograms were suspended, the long-term effects on the number of breast cancer cases now and in years to come are still unknown. However, some evidence already points to a decrease in the rate of mammograms when compared with prior to the pandemic. This is particularly true for patients at-risk for severe COVID-19, according to a recent study in the journal *Clinical Imaging*. This may be because the fear of

contracting COVID-19 outweighs the fear of a breast cancer diagnosis, the study suggests. Fewer screenings are taking place in hospitals, but they are shifting to outpatient settings such as imaging centers or mobile sites.

Overall, one in eight women will be diagnosed with breast cancer, and one in 39 won't survive.

Estimates of new breast cancer cases have increased with the American Cancer Society determining that 297,790 women will receive a breast cancer diagnosis this

year, up by about 7,200 cases from 2022.

Breast cancer is the most common cancer in women in the United States beside skin cancers. Even though the pandemic may have contributed to a slight slowing in progress in recent years, the rate of deaths from breast cancer have been steadily declining since 1989, down 43%. This is because of increased awareness, early screening and detection, and better treatments.

To prevent any slip in the progress of the last 30 years to save women's lives, boosting efforts regarding the safety of screenings could encourage women to return to regular mammograms.



Adagio Health

Working with providers in Pittsburgh and across the state, Adagio Health provides the Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program (BCCEDP) in 62 counties. Through this no cost program, eligible patients can receive free breast and cervical cancer screening and diagnostic testing, including:

- Clinical Breast Exams
- Pelvic Exam and Pap Test
- Screening Mammograms
- Breast and Cervical Diagnostic Testing including Ultrasounds & Needle Biopsy

Eligibility is based on insurance status, income, and household size. Screening for eligible patients is also available through the Adagio Health Mammogram Voucher Program. Additionally, Adagio Health administers the Breast & Cervical Cancer Prevention & Treatment Program, covering treatment and additional medical care for uninsured patients with a breast or cervical cancer diagnosis or pre-cancerous condition. Call 1-800-215-7494 or visit adagiohealth.org/cancer-screening-programs to learn more.

Washington Health System Women's Center

Breast cancer will impact 1 in 8 women in their lifetime. Our goal at Washington Health System Women's Center is to improve screening mammography rates in the community. Preventative screening is the best way for early detection. The WHS Women's Center, includes specialty trained team members with the most advanced diagnostic techniques available including the latest 3D mammography, ultrasound and breast biopsy. In addition, our fellowship trained Mammography Radiologist offer high quality diagnosis in the community setting.

Results drive a patient-centered treatment plan that is individualized for each woman. Our certified breast patient navigator guides patients through diagnosis and treatment by answering questions, providing information about available services and amenities, and ensuring a comfortable experience. A Breast Cancer Support Group is hosted every other month.

IMAGINE

early detection that's dedicated to you.



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because we put women at
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At Washington Health System, you're at the heart of everything we do. That's why our diagnostic breast team brings advanced 3D technology and decades of caring to every diagnosis. All so we can detect cancers earlier which leads to better outcomes—giving you more time with those you love.

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