



New Study Cements Fact That Mammography is a Primary Factor in Reduced Breast Cancer Deaths

[Tabar et al.](#) — published online November 8 in *Cancer* — debunks claims that [mammography screening](#) is not a primary factor in plummeting breast cancer deaths and reinforces the long-proven fact that [Mammography Saves Lives™](#).

The study showed that women screened regularly for breast cancer have a 47 percent lower risk of dying from the disease within 20 years of diagnosis than those not regularly screened. Ninety-five percent of all breast cancer deaths occur within 20 years of diagnosis.^{1,2,3}

“The Tabar study shows beyond doubt that therapy is far more effective when breast cancers are found earlier via mammography. Screening and therapy work hand in hand. Annual screening starting at age 40 and therapy are vital to saving the most lives,” said Dana Smetherman, MD, chair of the American College of Radiology Breast Imaging Commission.

National Cancer Institute SEER Data show that — since regular mammography use started in the 1980s, breast cancer deaths in women have fallen 43 percent. Breast cancers deaths in men — who are not screened, but get the same treatment as women — have remained virtually unchanged.

Tabar et al. results are also in keeping with large studies — such as [Otto et al.](#) and [Coldman et al.](#) — that regular mammography use cuts the risk of dying from breast cancer nearly in half. Early detection via mammography also enables women to be treated with less extensive surgery, fewer mastectomies and less chemotherapy.

“The conclusion of this study could not be more clear— modern treatments are important but not solely sufficient. Women who get regular screening mammograms cut their risk of dying of breast cancer by about half,” said Jay Baker, MD, president of the Society of Breast Imaging.

The American College of Radiology (ACR) and the Society of Breast imaging [continue to recommend](#) that women start getting annual mammograms at age 40 and continue as long as they are in good health. The ACR also advises women to have a risk assessment by the age of 30 to see if earlier screening is right for them.

For more information regarding breast cancer screening visit, please visit [EndtheConfusion.org](#), [MammographySavesLives.org](#) and [RadiologyInfo.org](#).

1 - Tabar L, Vitak B, Chen TH, et al. Swedish two-county trial: impact of mammographic screening on breast cancer mortality during 3 decades. *Radiology* 2011;260:658-63.

2 - Toikkanen SP, Kujari HP, Joensuu H. Factors predicting late mortality from breast cancer. *Eur J Cancer* 1991;27:586-91.

3 - Joensuu H, Pylkkanen L, Toikkanen S. Late mortality from pT1N0M0 breast carcinoma. *Cancer* 1999;85:2183-9.