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## Too Many Mammograms?

An interesting opinion article this past week concerned mammograms and whether they should be done as frequently as they are. The authors commented on what they view as politically mandated care instead of evidence-based care.

The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) had traditionally recommended that based on the evidence, mammograms should begin when a woman turns 40 and then every two years. In 2012, the recommendation was changed to mammograms beginning at 50. The reason for the change was statistics: few lives would be saved by beginning tests earlier. Needless to say, women were not happy. The opposition was so great that the latest budget appropriation by Congress recommended following the earlier USPSTF for mammography beginning at 40.

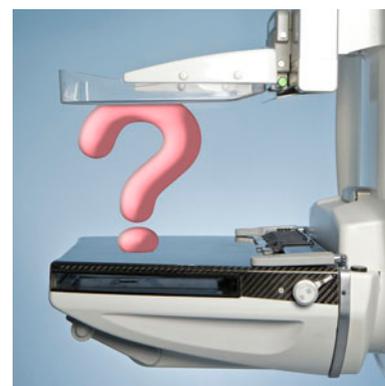
The authors are appalled that a legislative body would contradict the scientific evidence. They go to great length to show that the USPSTF does not consider the costs of testing, just the potential benefit to the population. They state that excessive testing will result in false-positive results, unnecessary biopsies, and excessive treatment relative to the benefit to all women. Money will be diverted from diagnosing other diseases that can affect women in their 40s such as cardiovascular disease.

You can read their entire comment at the link below. Do you buy their argument? Thursday we'll take a look at a study that also talks about preventive tests and whether they're worthwhile.

What are you prepared to do today?

**Dr. Chet**

Reference: [A Public Health Framework for Screening Mammography: Evidence-Based vs Politically Mandated Care](#)



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