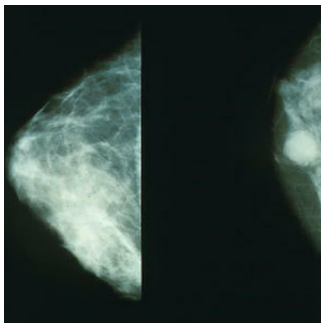

Screen-detected Breast Cancers Don't Regress If Left Untreated



A prospective cohort study shows that breast cancers detected by mammography screening do not spontaneously disappear or regress if left untreated. The scientific findings, published in Journal of the American College of Radiology, disprove claims that many cancers found via mammography may simply “go away” if left undiscovered or untreated.

Among all practices involved in the study, 25,281 screen-detected invasive breast cancers and 9,360 cases of screen-detected ductal carcinoma in situ were reported over the 10-year study period. Among these cancers, there were 240 cases of untreated invasive breast cancer and 239 cases of untreated ductal carcinoma in situ. None were reported to have spontaneously disappeared or regressed at next mammography.

Researchers noted that an unknown percentage of these 479 cases represent overdiagnosis. However, because all untreated screen-detected cancers were visible and suspicious for malignancy at next mammographic examination, delaying the onset of screening (from age 40 to ages 45 or 50) or increasing the interval between screenings (biennial vs. annual) should not reduce the frequency of overdiagnosis, they added.

Medical science cannot yet determine which cancers will or will not advance to kill the person afflicted.

Source: [Journal of the American College of Radiology](#)

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