
Mammography Screening Recommended in Older Women



When it comes to breast cancer screening in women, there is consensus that screening is beneficial in women between the ages of 50 to 69 years. However, to date, evidence of the benefits of mammography screening in women over the age of 69 is still quite scarce.

A study was conducted in Sweden to compare breast cancer mortality within the period 1986 to 2012. Women were invited to screening up to the age of 74 years (study group), and findings were compared with women who were invited for up to 69 years (control group).

Participants were followed up for 20 years. During this time, there were 1040 breast cancer deaths in the study group and 1173 breast cancer deaths in the control group. The researchers found that the breast cancer mortality rate was 20% lower for women who had mammography screening between the ages of 70 and 74 compared to those who were only screened till age 69. The mortality reduction in the older age group was nearly 27%.

According to findings from this large study conducted in Sweden, mammography is efficient for women over the age of 70. In women of this age group who were invited for regular mammography screening, the reduction in mortality was quite significant.

As per the assessment of the Swedish researchers, setting the upper age limit for mammography screening to 74 is justified. The study findings and recommendations are based on 20 years of follow up and over 2000 cancer deaths.

There has been quite an uncertainty regarding the recommendations for mammography screening for older women. Different countries have different assessments, and recommendations tend to vary. Most countries offer mammography screening for women up to the age of 69, but countries like Sweden have set an upper age limit to 74.

The researchers point out that since we live longer and also remain active in old age, it makes sense to screen older women for cancer so that treatment can begin in time.

Source: [Cancer Epidemiol Biomarkers](#)

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