

Self-Scheduled Mammograms Lead to Increased Screening Rates



According to new paper published in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine, the capability to self-schedule mammograms was associated with a 15% increase in follow-through with the screening.

When patients lack the time to call a scheduling line or encounter challenges in finding appointments that suit their schedule, self-scheduling facilitates a smoother path to completing mammograms.

As the study's lead author, Kimberly Waddell, PhD, MSCI, said "Simple changes like these can have an outsized impact on preventive health screenings".

The research team examined data from 2016 to 2019, a period during which the University of Pennsylvania Health System provided patients with the option to self-schedule mammograms through their personal online patient portals. This data was then compared to information from 2014 to 2016, before this was possible.

To complete a self-schedule, a patient needed an order, initiated after consulting with their primary care provider. They would then log in to their patient portal and navigate to a scheduling link. Additionally, patients received email reminders to facilitate self-scheduling.

Over the study period, mammogram data from approximately 35,000 patient visits doubled, increasing from 22% to 50%.

Within that timeframe, the researchers found that self-scheduling was associated with an approximate 13 percentage point increase in screening completions. When applied at scale to the 35,000 patients in the study, this translates to approximately 4,500 more people undergoing screening.

Study co-author Jake Moore, MBA, director of Access Optimization at Penn Medicine, concluded "Patients want options on ways to schedule their appointment, and the self-scheduling feature provides another, easy 24/7 pathway to schedule when it's convenient to them".

Source: [Penn Medicine News](#)

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