

We would appreciate any additional comments regarding breast screening, your breast screening experience, or ways you feel breast screening in Canada can be improved to promote early detection of breast cancer.

Open-Ended Response

All women should be screened at 40

Younger women need screening. I am surrounded by women in their 30s with advanced breast cancer. It's all grade 3 and aggressive. They are dying. Devastating. Young children without moms. Spouses without partners. Younger women are told "we're too young for breast cancer" and yet we're getting diagnosed during and after pregnancy. The worst is when some physician tells us not to worry, "just enjoy your new baby. It's a clogged milk duct." Awful how we're infantilized with our real concerns. And now we die because we're not taken seriously. A simple ultrasound would have alerted to the malignancy. I am so angry and lost. And I'm "lucky" because I found it early, but many don't. And now I watch those women who helped me through the nightmare die horrible deaths. All because they were "too young to have cancer". They are not too young to have cancer. They are too young to die from cancer.

Even though my mom had breast cancer my doctor did not recommend screening saying that hereditary is very low

Please remove the pressure placed on the breast during screening. The pressure has stopped gals I know from going again

I think getting rid of the ongoing doctor requisitions would help - once you get one referral, you should be able to go annually (or every two years, depending on your circumstances, like the after 40 screening). Maybe connect up with the doctor referral mammogram people too because they didn't mention anything about my breast density to me - I knew I was at risk because of my family history but I didn't know I was at even greater risk because I had very dense breasts... I probably would have pushed to get the extra screening between my first mammogram and my age 40 mammogram had I known.

I had breast cancer under a year ago.

Dense breast information should routinely be shared with women
improved imaging, other than that I had a good experience

Make cone beam breast CT the standard! No compression or breast damage. High resolution 3d image. I refuse any mammogram because the techs manhandled me, were abrupt and dislocated my ribs, caused significant long lasting breast swelling and damaged my shoulder. I was repeatedly ignored when I brought up pain, swelling related to this. My chiropractor was the only one who manually assessed and put my ribs (serratus region) back in place and monitored. Mammogram is the only screening where patients bodies are forcefully compressed.

Was happy at my last screening to receive detailed info on breast density, including what my breast density is. All provinces should provide this.

Women, especially young women are being denied access to mammogram screening based on their age... this is wrong and by the time they finally convince a dr to listen their cancer has advanced. In my case my cancer was discovered at my annual mammogram, but perhaps it was there the year before... and it was missed because of my dense breast tissue. I am told there is a new type of ultrasound that will support the info provided by a mammogram

Ultrasounds should be offered always

Women of colour should have further breast screening, since they are at a higher risk for early detection I'd appreciate regular reminders from screening that I'm due again — such as the way dental offices will remind you to return...

Let all women in Canada book their own mammogram

I feel younger women should start getting them at 35, I think they should be shown how to do a proper breast examination, I feel communication between oncologist, surgeons and patients should be allowed more time all appointments seem so rushed and there's not enough time for questions to be properly answered!

I had a clear mammogram in January 2018 and was diagnosed with a 6 cm posterior lobular tumour 10 months later. I had dense breasts and the tumour went undetected. Thank God for self breast exams or I probably wouldn't be here 3 yrs later. .

We used to have a nurse at our breast Screening Clinic but the position became redundant! A great service taken from us.... absolutely terrible!

I have had to advocate for myself to obtain regular mammograms. (I have documented evidence of breast density of >75% on my mammograms.)

I have Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome, and my last two mammograms left me with extensive bruising. I asked about ultrasound as an alternative, and was told it isn't recommended without symptoms. With dense breast tissue, an immediate family history, and the EDS, I feel I should automatically have both.

My experience has been good. After finding first cyst, I have been monitored closely with both mammograms and follow up ultrasounds. Fortunately, there has been no sign of breast cancer, just dense breasts and a diagnosis of poly cystic breasts.

Clear guidelines on how often women should have mammograms.

Family doctors should do breast exams on all adult female patients & at 40 yrs. of age & up, all women should be referred for an annual mammogram.

I believe women should start screening at 40, and should be told they have dense breasts as soon as it is noted. Women with dense breasts should have access to regular MRI screening as the mammogram and ultrasound also did not detect all of my lumps, nor the size of them but the MRI did.

The mammogram showed no lump but the ultrasound did. Thanks to my dr. For Recommending it . Early treatment saved me.

I was diagnosed with breast cancer at age 36 and lucky I pressed GP for mammogram. The mammogram and ultrasound followed are what confirmed my tumor

I had a mammogram with a letter saying I had dense breaststroke but clear mammogram. The next month I developed swollen lymph node and was diagnosed with cancer 5 months later. The cancer was present for the initial mammogram but undetected

Doctors need to stop with all the red tape and bureaucratic nonsense when it comes to "allowing" women to request a mammogram at any age.

I had a cyst that was drained. No follow up at all. 5 years later large tumour evident in same spot and I thought it was a cyst however after mammogram/biopsy was diagnosed with 6.5 cm cancerous tumour. Had I had regular follow ups, I believe this would have been caught much sooner and I would have had a very different outcome. Mastectomy required. 18 chemo sessions, 25 radiation sessions and a lot of unnecessary grief.

Breast mammogram at 40 to baseline and subsequently monitor any changes. I was 48 when diagnosed. Also educate that 70 per cent have NO family history that are diagnosed.

Basically, I don't think that a woman should need to be pushy with her physician in order to be given a requisition for screening.

Daughters of breast cancer stricken mothers should be screened and made aware of higher risk of having breast cancer by their health care providers, which not always the case.

In Ontario, my GP made sure I had an annual mammogram because of my mother's BC. Here in Manitoba, I am only getting it every 2 years and I was lucky to start before the age of 50 because my GYN/OB (didn't have a GP when I first moved here) recognized my concern and requisitioned it. I also discovered after the fact that because of my GYN/OB requisition, I was going to the top tier of radiology. It seems that in Manitoba, the BreastCare program that kicks in at age 50 years old provides a very basic mammogram and if something is spotted or unusual, you are kicked up to the next level (which is luckily the level of mammography that I get every two years).

I'm not sure but I think this is the second time I have completed the survey

I was refused a mammogram because i was too young eventhough i was presenting a significant sized tumor to my doctor. It was my obgyn that finally sent me for a mammogram. i had no family history period, my mother was adopted and I had no information of either my mother's or father's side health history, because of that i am low risk??? I finally was diagnosed with triple negative cancer.

I have been in Yukon 4 years and have not been able to get a family doctor. Went to see a nurse practioner and she booked me for a mamogram. It's tomorrow!

The most important factor, based on my experience, is the doctors and medical community need to listen to women when they request mammograms. Sometimes, as in my case, it is purely intuition that sends them asking for one.

I was so impressed with how quickly the process went at the Jimmy Pattison Clinic in Surrey. I was lucky enough to get a cancellation but unfortunately it would have been a 3 month wait to get in which is unfortunate.

I am 51 now, and had a breast reduction at age 34 first mammogram was around 41-42. I have dense breasts and the scar tissue lines from the reduction surgery show up on the screening as "suspicious". I think that I have had 4-5 mammograms now and each time it's pushed through to the next level of ultrasound. Very stressful. Personally I find mammograms quite painful and have visible bruising afterwards.

Lower the age back to 40!!

I was on the breast cancer screening program in Ontario. I was cleared of my mammogram in BC but new doctor decided I should have a fine needles biopsy. The screening process didn't work for me

Everyone should be informed of breast density and have access to mammogram, and ultrasound if needed. Even my oncologist couldn't answer if it would be better for me to be having ultrasound (my breasts are C density and 2 sisters with breast cancer). The docs need better training

I think increased public education, resources, research & information is needed. And to support women with breast screening & health who decide to delay or not have mammogram

As it stands a woman has to call her dr and wait for an appointment to be seen and then given a referral. Another wait until being seen. In some cases cancer stages increase because of this. Unacceptable and unnecessary in my opinion.

Family physicians need more education to understand dense breasts and the need for breast ultrasound in addition to mammograms

I book it every year on my birthday so I don't forget and also as a gift to myself for looking after my own health.

Since the federal recommendations changed to 50+, I feel the awareness of guidelines has become much fuzzier. I had to look up to see that women 40-50 are still eligible.

More info available and reminders for women to get mamogrammed

N/a

Not enough good drs

If breast density is an issue, a person should be eligible for routine breast ultrasound appointments or other testing to be certain cancer is not missed.

When I was asking my doc about breast density before I knew my status, she indicated that despite her request, extra screening/tests was denied for her patients with high breast density without specific symptoms.

I asked for density after attending a Breast Density event, but I didn't know what to do once I found out. (They were dense)

Having the mobile screening truck come to my workplace was awesome. It was so easy and I was done in 10 minutes

I moved from AB to SK about 7 years ago. I find SK definitely lagging behind AB in breast health information! I was the one who informed the radiologist in SK about Dense Breast Canada as a resource. When I booked my first mammogram in SK I mentioned I had dense breasts and the intake person replied "all women have dense breasts" !

Current screening facility a great improvement. Fortunate I was able to get yearly mammograms. When my cancer was diagnosed at 63 years of age, it was very rapid growing. But catching it early allowed a lumpectomy, sentinel node removal and biopsy, Chemo and radiation to treat it effectively. September 2021 marks 6 years since surgery
I agree women need to advocate for themselves.

Unsure

Was not aware there is a medical word "dense" breast, the technician doing my first said that my breasts were dense but I thought she was giving me the excuse of why she has the machine so tightly pressed that it hurt. I have not had a Dr talk about my results (negative) or mention anything.

Ultrasounds should be covered by provincial medical plans, especially for women in the top two quartiles.

I believe that mammograms should be started in women in their 20s, especially if there is a family history of cancer (of any sort).

MBC de novo and discover by myself that my density was C-D on my two last mammo before my diagnostic

Women with dense breast should have diagnostic mammograms and not just screening ones. Anything abnormal should be followed up by an ultrasound or needle biopsy. Having Dr at your Breast Check clinic wave you off is not the answer. I had a grade 3 cancer which grew quickly, and yes it did cause pain and discomfort so women should not follow the "if it hurts it's not cancer".

Should go back to starting mammograms at 40

I think my tax dollars should be used to scan my breast yearly.

Make this a requirement

Women should know they have a right to self refer at 50 in Manitoba for more frequent screening. If I had known, my cancer would most likely have been found over a year earlier than it was.

Follow up after treatment for early stage BC is inadequate. With 33% of people ultimately having metastasis, doctors need to be more aware of the high risk for this group. Early detection of metastasis is every bit as important as of the original cancer. The protocol for follow up needs to be studied.

ALL provinces should allow for mammograms starting at age 40! My aunt had stage 3 BC in her early 40's, I was REFUSED A MAMMO at age 40, Dx Stage 4, by age 41!!!

Ultrasound vs mammogram.... The mammogram is outdated and painful

Should be a regular part of a woman's yearly exam

I think younger women should be about to get mammograms. So many young women (me included) got breast cancer before we turned 40

I would be nice to have this info earlier in life. I'm in my 30s and I know nothing about breast screening. Maybe start education in the sex Ed classes in high school.

More awareness

If there is a family history on maternal side insist on an early mammogram. One family member at 23, one in her early 40's and a sister in her 40's. Only sister died but had my cousin not been in a car accident and been unconscious so a full body scan was necessary, it would never have been found....

Women with Dean's's breasts should be told! And offered an ultrasound in a sit-up. To a mammogram Breast screening should be every year.

My mother was diagnosed with breast cancer when she finally convinced her doctor that she needed an ultrasound, that the mammogram was not showing what she could feel. I, like her, am fairly flat chested. I do not trust that a mammogram would be an effective screening test for me.

I'm happy to get my appointment reminder every 2 years and have always been comfortable with the mammogram process.

All women should have the opportunity for diagnostic ultrasound based on their breast density this should be easily accessible and there should be only 2 week wait times

Technicians should be reminded periodically to treat their patients kindly. Patients might be modest and feel nervous and /or intimidated by the procedure.

I feel a woman should not have to wait nor require a requisition to get a mammogram. I had lumps and had to fight for a mammogram and ultrasound. Having a result on site and consultation would be critical to information and future care as well as a reduction in stress waiting for results

I went for a monogram and because of density the results were inconclusive and an ultrasound was recommended. I am told this is a better screening measure which many don't know

The two times I found my own breast lumps 1. The doctor didn't feel them 2. Mammograms we're both inconclusive. I had to insist my lumps were there and needed further investigation. Thankfully I found my cancers early and with insisting on biopsies was able to survive.

I developed pain in one breast at an earlier age. A lump was discovered and was sent for screening. At 54 I was sent for a breast biopsy due to something that showed up on a regular mammogram and 4 repeat, 6 month interval screenings. Thankfully results showed nothing to be concerned about.

I actually had my screening yesterday. I have not had difficulty with the procedure previously, but due to cardiac surgery and subsequent complications, my anatomy is different than it used to be. The techs should be trained in techniques that accommodate women who may not have "normal" anatomy.

Over 20 years ago the hospital messed up my mammogram in that the scan was too dark to read and basically tried to scare me into returning for another one. Telling me "want I must do!" Perhaps it was a language issue. In any case I went back 6 months later, no change so I informed my doctor I would not be doing any more mammograms.

Canada may give the chance to every woman over 35-40 years old could have a preventive mammogram In Quebec we have a breast screening program that reminds you every two years as well as the doctor's referral.

I feel like women should have the right to book their mammograms. It's pretty private and can be awkward to ask a doctor at times and why not allow women to be proactive if they want to be safe. I had a reduction and my tissue was sent to pathology and came back clear but it's still something I always wonder about.

Please tell doctors to stop telling patients that it would scare women to do/talk or ask about breast self-exams. This is ridiculous and I am not sure when this because the new procedure. This has to change. Family doctors must educate and ask about breast health and offer mammograms/ultrasounds to young women.

I feel that because my mother, and myself have each had breast cancer and she had a simple mastectomy and I had a radical mastectomy, radiation and chemo, my daughter and grand daughters should be able to have screening at an earlier age

Women with dense breasts and and history of breast cancer should not have to advocate to receive screening ultrasounds or MRI in addition to mammograms. They should be a given.

Screening on demand. No questions. Faster wait times

Allow women to have a mammogram at any age

Booked for a suggested recall from physician today

I think breast screening has to be tailored to our own risks.

I am very angry that in Ontario the breast cancer screening no longer includes actual breast exam!!! It's outrageous

We should be able to have mammograms at age 40, no matter the province. We should be made aware of dense breast tissue, and the risks. We need to have our health care people give us more information

It would be so beneficial to have the mobile mammogram bus up and running again as we were able to book our own appointments with them. Sadly cannot book a mammogram at a radiology clinic ourselves. I'm nearly two years past due for my next mammogram. And once I am able to connect with my family physician, and they contact the radiology clinic, it will be another 6 months before I'm able to get an appointment as they are always booking 4-6 months ahead.

Too long of a wait time. Booked in June and can't get a mammogram til the very end of November!!!! Ridiculous!

Also mention cancer in thymus gland and swallowing issues as a symptom

Excellent and thorough yearly screening because of maternal family history. I like that the radiologist reads the mammo or ultrasound right away and tells me, without having to wait until my doctor sees the results.

The testing equipment/machines were not fully user friendly for people with disabilities. However that was 15 years ago. Maybe there is much more easier to use machines now. I am not comfortable AT ALL, to have my breasts hanging out for all these lab techs that seem to be around. But again, that was awhile ago- and perhaps dignity and privacy has gotten a little better.

I am a breast cancer survivor. I felt a lump but nothing showed on my mammogram due to dense breasts. They were going to send me home but I knew I had a lump so I asked for an ultrasound and it was detected and it was malignant.

Mammograms are very painful for women with dense breasts! Is there no other way to provide screening? The mammogram is a terrible, painful machine. Please find a better method of detection.

Breast screening programs where I live are only available during typical office hours. Many women work in jobs without sick benefits, therefore having to miss paid hours in order to have a screening mammogram done. Many are in low income brackets and can not afford the lost wages, so they don't go. Screening clinic hours need to be flexible, more effort needs to go into physicians setting up appointments and screening programs offering variable hours.

I asked mammogram technician about ultrasound being done instead of mammogram and she told me there was no evidence it detected breast cancer "better" than mammogram

Thank you for all the work you are doing on behalf of Canadian women

the doctor should stress for a mammogram and maybe a scan if the mammogram does not show enough.

They should be automatically scheduled, like Pap tests, so you'd just get a letter saying it's time for your screening instead of having to make an appointment to ask the doctor if you can have a requisition.

As a survivor of breast cancer 26 years ago at age 55 (no previous history in my family) I strongly am a promoter of early detection.

Again early detection is important!!! It is very uncomfortable . It has been many years since I personally have had a mammogram because of double mastectomy. Things have changed over time.

I feel if irregularities are noted on a screen. It should be another kind of screen, not a repeat mammogram...

I have never discussed the results of my mammogram with my healthcare provider I'm get very little information from the technician

Although I have dense breasts and I asked my doctor for a follow up ultrasound, the request was refused due to an opinion that it would be unhelpful. I didn't feel comfortable arguing so I didn't pursue. From your website, an ultrasound would be valuable and all Doctors need to be consistent in their recommendations on this matter.

We should always be advised of our breast density after a screening.

I think my breast cancer was caught early. 25 years later I am still here after 6 months of chemotherapy and 6 weeks of radiation.

I was seen quickly post physical. The mass was not palpable at the time. (3weeks later) My first lumpectomy was a 9 mm mass weighing 340 gms. 3 weeks after being seen by the surgeon.

Always very professional! It was through breast screening that my cancer was detected. Breast screening is very important.

My doctor makes me wait too long before sending me for my annual mammogram, even 15years after breast cancer.

I have to ask for a mammogram requisition now that I'm over the age of 70, otherwise my doctor won't mention it.

I was told I have dense breasts but no action taken. I asked for ultrasound or MRI and my gp said no. What is the point of telling women they have dense breasts and then advise no action or additional screening??

In BC all women aged 40 and up should be notified when they are 39 that they are eligible for screening to begin at 40.

I have had two mammograms because of lumps. Only at my last screening was I informed I have dense breasts. But no other information/risks were provided. Thank you for raising awareness

My only concern in BC is that it took several months when I phoned to book my regular mammogram.

Perhaps COVID related, but there seemed to be a backlog which isn't ideal.

for some reason women are scared of the actual process of the mammogram. More information about how easy it is and how quick.

reminder to get mammogram is most effective

The more we can educate women, and everyone, the better chance we have against fighting breast cancer.

This survey was helpful. Thank you.

When I first asked about density screening at a regular mamo appointment, the technician did not know what I was asking for and didn't appear to be aware of it. However, when I asked about the results, the person providing them had the info. The technician had made a note that I had asked.

My breast screening clinic in NL used to, but no longer offers physical examination of breasts by experienced clinicians, only mammograms. For a woman with dense breasts, this leaves a gap in my health care.

I feel breast screening should start at age 20. I know of, and have read about women under the age of 40 who get breast cancer.

Advocate for yourself especially with family history. Women should be able to ask their dr to send them for mammo as early as can be.

I feel very fortunate that my family doctor has been supportive in providing me with access to screening before age 50. However, I know many other women that have been denied for screening. In my opinion, 50 is too late to start screening and it should change to age 40 (or even younger based on family history).

My first mammogram was at age 26 due to an indentation. I had many over the years before age 40 due to detection of painful lumps. I had annual mammograms since my 40s (exact age unknown).

Because recurrence of breast cancer is less likely to be in the breast than in other areas of the body e.g. spine, brain, lungs, it seems that ultrasound/MRI screening for dense breasts is MOST important in screening for women who have not had breast cancer before. It would be great to have information on your website that also speaks to women who have ALREADY had breast cancer and what things they should advocate for and whether the information is as applicable.

All mammograms should be diagnostics

Fabulous job - with the awareness of dense breasts you are providing!!

My oncologist did not think dense breasts were an issue. More education for health care providers needed.

Ultrasound I feel should be used more regularly & earlier for women of high risk factors. I have always had a good experience when booking & going for my mammograms. I started getting mammograms at age 30. I just had my first breast ultrasound this year at age 51. I will be having regular mammograms and ultrasounds at the advise of my family physician. I think this survey is a very good idea to gather & provide women with the information we need.

Should be easier to get an appt without having to see your doctor

My breast density is D. I wasn't offered an ultrasound- I had to push for one. I was told the wait is up to a year and that although I have a referral I'll most likely only be contacted some time in 2022

Proactively offer ultrasound for those with dense breasts. I always have to ask and encounter resistance when booking. We should receive ultrasound reminders in the same way we receive mammogram reminders.

I was diagnosed with breast cancer and my mammogram was clear due to the density of my breast tissue. I have been requesting a breast MRI as part of my follow up but it keeps getting denied because I don't meet the guidelines. My oncologist is still fighting for me to have one.

I get a notice every 2 years for a mammogram (I'm 51 years old) I think it should be every year. My experience has always been great - very professional technicians and make you feel at ease in a very awkward situation.

I believe any time a woman is concerned and feels something isn't right with her breasts she deserves to be screened

Women should be able to request a mammogram anytime, especially there is history of breast cancer in their family

I absolutely believe women should easily be able to access screening by the age of 40, based on the data that approx. 20% of breast cancer patients are in their 40s. I also wish screening clinics worked directly with the patient rather than through the doctor, as this would have prevented me missing my six-month (and all subsequent) follow-up appointments since my doctor FORGOT to book me back in. (Cysts had been found and the clinic wanted to see me again, but I was never told.) I only found this out three years later when I found another lump. Needless to say I was very angry about this negligence—and it could have been prevented if I hadn't had to work through my doctor.

I feel that women need to advocate for themselves, because the medical system is discouraging screening because of the "damage and stress caused by false positives". Personally, I would much rather catch something early, as there is a high rate of early breast cancer in my extended family. Thank you Dense Breasts.ca for your amazing educational and advocacy work!

More awareness to be spread among women by govt. initiatives such as health care practitioners (family doctors) to encourage arranging such discussions during regular doctor visits.

Women should be aware of all the risks and their family history to make an informed decision.

People with breast and ovarian cancer in their families should be allowed To have the gene test done. I am sure I cost the health care system more getting alternating MRIs and mammograms every month and it doesn't make sense. I am nervous that I have the gene and worry frequently about it and about the health of my sisters. It is also arbitrary if I and my sisters get the alternating tests- I was getting it and then it got cancelled so now I have to go request these tests every 6 months, instead. Only one of one 3 sisters is also allowed to have these alternating tests- the other 2's have doctors that don't support it.

The age for first mammogram should be before age 50. When I asked about it for several years before I turned 50, I felt I was being put off. I was always concerned about waiting so long to get one.

I feel in my province, NL. , health care is reactive. Tests that should be done are not , unless requested by the patient, this includes mammograms. I feel women should have their own clinic where mammograms and Pap Smears are provided through appts. by women.

I think like a pap it should be offered earlier and when it comes to equipment there should be a common standard. The hospital where I live is getting a 3D mammography machine, but the screening clinic doesn't have it. Up to age 50 my screening was always at the hospital but now I have to go to the screening clinic and I have very dense breasts.

I feel screening should start at 40. You say that 75% have no risk factors, well every time I have an issue with my breasts and go for further screening the first thing the technicians and radiologists ask is if you have a family history and then the situation is not taken as seriously. I worry because of this my testing is not taken further. I feel women with such dense breasts should have MRI's. There should be something more that can be done to see into the ducts other than the ducts are not dilated. I have been told fluid from the breast is normal, I don't agree with this. From one breast that is. Breast screening in NL is definitely not taken seriously enough. I am constantly fighting to get the proper screening I need, I am so afraid they are missing breast cancer in my breasts. Please change things in NL.

I cannot complain about my breast screening experience. It detected my breast cancer in at age 45. I have a good supportive doctor who listens.

Would preferred Breast screening using ultrasound bs mammogram

Too many cases of, "let's wait awhile and see if it grows." Or, "of course your breast hurts, you're pregnant," or "you're breast feeding." My first cousin died because of this "care." Women need to be taught to be empowered about their own care and insisting that providers respond and test their own findings or those of their patients!!!

Because my breasts are dense, I get a call back almost every year and it's very scary. I usually have to get an ultrasound and once had a fine needle aspiration of a lump. It would be great if someone could find a less painful diagnostic tool than a mammogram.

I was told I had dense breast tissue, but was not told that this could mask breast cancer. I only learned this right now while doing this survey.

Mammograms should be less painful for large breasted women. I have extra large breast and find it extremely uncomfortable. Why not make ultrasound more available.

I have been told that I have dense breasts but only recently have been notified that I have over 75% dense breast tissue. My sister passed away from breast cancer at the age of 45.

They make a difference, it found cancer in my breast and if I didn't have a mammogram I might not be here.

Should not need a requisition for breast screening takes too long to see a dr and I am loosing mine at the end of the year ! What am I to do

I was diagnosed with Stage 3 breast cancer at the age of 43 because I found a lump in my breast. I think the earlier the screening, the better.

I had no idea breast density had any impact on breast cancer. I have never had a breast examination by my healthcare provider despite my mother having breast cancer. Early detection begins with our health care providers and young woman, so they have the knowledge to advocate for themselves when they reach the age of requiring mammograms, etc

I have dense breasts & was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2012. I am now 8 years cancer free & have a mammogram every year

Hard to get a breast MRI in Newfoundland even if it is recommended by other health care provider

Breast cancer clinics for mammograms and counselling in every province and every person should be given a copy of their mammogram . I was told that my mammogram was ok but if I had read it , I would have inquired to get more testing . This was 5 years ago , hopefully we have improved with screening

I think that women should be able to get screening at 40.

In NL, once recommended for yearly exams, a patient should be able to book it themselves without going to a physician.

I would like to see a someone be able to give you a Breast examination the day of your mammogram. We used to have this but due to Government cuts it was taken away from us.

I was diagnosed with breast cancer via an MRI & an axillary lymph node dissection. The mammogram had stated a "normal" mam. I have dense breasts & even knowing that I had Breast cancer, radiologists could not detect the tumour on the mam.

I was told screening at age 40 wasn't recommended, due to lack of risk factors, and then I was diagnosed with triple negative breast cancer metastasized to lymph nodes at age 42. I wish I had pushed for a mammogram at age 40.

I strongly believe that all women should know their percentage of dense breast tissues. I am to be reviewed annually, but in most cases cannot get a mammogram until at least 18 months. I have NEVER had a discussion with my GP about breast density.

I have begged for an ultrasound to be done every time I've had a mammogram for the last 20 years. (Since bc diagnosis and treatment). It has always been refused.

I would also receive an ultrasound.

Since I started my life in Canada I had only praises for the Alberta Health Care, the only Canadian Care I used but when I moved to Canada from Brazil at the age of 36 and in Brazil the recommendation for women to have mammograms is to start at the age of 35 and should be done annually so I had 2 mammograms done before moving here and I was surprised when I found out that I should start to have mammograms at the age 40 and not even annually. When I went to have my first mammogram here at the age of 40, I took with me the two mammograms images to show for comparison but the person who did my images didn't want to see my old mammograms. One hour after I left the lab they called me asking for me to return because they found something odd in the exam. I went back there immediately and I was seen by a doctor who this time took the time to see my previous exams and compared the images to find out there was nothing wrong with their findings since what they saw in the new images was already there five years before. So I could have been spared of the emotional stress I passed if the person who performed my exam did not presumed that if an exam was done in another country should not be valid or considered accurate.

More encouragement is needed for women to ask for earlier screening. I asked at 40 and was fully supported by my family md

I believe that women over 20 plus should be eligible for provincial screening program as there is more breast cancer in all ages.

I have extremely dense breasts and I would prefer other screening methods such as an ultrasound or whatever else but my physician doesn't think so

Had biopsy which was negative in my mid forties, but screened regularly after. Had mammogram, then ultrasound told all normal and just less than 1 yr later i felt lump had not resolved had another ultrasound, it was triple negative breast cancer stage 3 , very large. I have believed that during the original ultrasound the hcp spent more time examining the wrong breast and i thought he was just being thorough and examining both.

No problem, quick procedure, but you can only hope that the Dr. Who's looking at your rads is paying attention.

Dense breast tissue went every year since early thirties. Lumpy breast tissue . I was stunned last year when after 20 years of going I was told I didn't need annual screening. While I understand after menopause there is a difference in tissue and maybe risk I was not comfortable and I had to ask to be out back on the annual list . I have always been told I have higher risk NDA then to tell me I was not getting annual mammogram really frustrated me . I also went for thermography screening which also shows red areas or dense tissue areas . Bottom line is I asked for the annual check ups to be maintained.

I find that in my province (N.B.),it is a very proficient program.No negative experiences

I felt that my mamogram/ diagnosis were dealt with in a timely fashion . Awesome oncology team at Saint John Regional Hospital.

Very appreciative for the breast screening clinics here in NB but was refused a neck protector when I requested one. What is your opinion on using neck guards?

I think it should be started when women are in their 20's

There is a lack of access to family doctors which limits access to information on breast screening. It was my family doctor that noted my family history and sent me for early mammograms. I did end up with breast cancer, which was picked up on a mammogram later in my life. The early mammogram was needed as a reference as my breasts were dense and there a lot things in the image that needed comparison. More primary care options are needed.

Dense breast screening is very important for me as a regular mammogram or ultrasound doesn't show anything because of the severe density in both breasts.

Provide info on what to do if you have very dense breasts but have no other risk factors

When I asked my NP about doing a breast exam she said that the recommendation was that we do our own checks as I would be more familiar with my breasts as opposed to her, my thought was that I don't know what to look for besides an obvious lump and may miss something important that only a trained professional could detect.

I find the recall process very stressful as there is no transparency. I would rather have incomplete info than be left to let my imagination go wild.

I was 45 and it was too late for me

Awareness/articles on social media. Pamphlets/info at prenatal/postnatal/pap smear screenings.

There is always room for improvement. In NB our health care is so lacking, access to doctors, that many women are going undiagnosed due to limited access to a healthcare provider. Wait time is too long. We need to start encouraging younger women to be more aware of changes in their breasts. Not all women have access to the correct information

I'd prefer if I could get my mammograms done in Fredericton. I always have to go to the Oromocto hospital and then get called to go to the Fredericton hospital. Would be simpler if I could just go to the Fredericton location. But I'm glad just to be able to get it done.

Yes most certainly!

I have dense breasts C and a strong family history of breast cancer but my doctor and the specialist he consults do not believe that any further testing is necessary. I would like an ultrasound at least.

occasional advertising campaigns about risks, getting women to ask their families about their family history, ages for first and last (if last applies) screening, encouraging a woman's partner to add their encouragement

I didn't know ultrasounds were important for women with dense breasts. My GP gave me a requisition once but I don't know how often this should be done.

Have health care provider show/tell you how to do self-examinations

I was diagnosed with Breast Cancer at age 43

50 is too late for many women. If density is an issue alternative testing should be done as mammograms easily miss cancerous areas at early stages

Provide more education of breast cancer symptoms to encourage women to find-it early. Provide info on dense breast and increased risk of cancer to all women having screening.

I feel most family physicians (at least the ones I've dealt with) do try to stay on top of factors, but sometimes there are other issues that are pressing. In my family, it's a strong presence of autoimmune and little cancer... they try to cover it all but it's overwhelming

Have ultrasound as well as monogram

For many, many years I have known I have dense breast tissue. It's clear through experience, medical media and professionals that mammograms alone cannot detect tumours due to similarity in color. I feel woman with dense breasts should automatically go for ultra-sound exams where the chances of catching a lump is significantly higher. I consider myself very lucky, I felt my lump in its early stages (stage 1). However, if it was caught earlier perhaps not as much of my breast would have been removed or maybe none at all with treatments today. Even after my experience and routine 6month check-ups with my oncologist, they still only send me for mammograms. I do not have confidence at all that these exams will detect any other potential lumps After being diagnosed; a close friend, nurse practitioner in the U.S. said ultra-sound exams on dense breast patients is standard procedure.

The lack of available practitioners in New Brunswick leaves a lot of people without a family doctor, so unable to get a referral for a screening to identify if there are any risk factors or markers for breast cancer. Sadly due to lack of family doctors a lot of New Brunwickers where a referral is required for breast screening, decreases chances of early detection. Only being addressed once or had spread causing other issues forcing people to use Emergency. It would be a great day if women in new Brunswick could bill their own screening.

My doctor is very supportive

Not only is there a wait time for a mammogram (even pre-covid), the fact that I have dense breasts has never been noted to my dr (from the radiologist that reads them). There is a serious disconnect here. Faster follow up of abnormal results would be helpful to decrease anxiety for those who have abnormal screens.

The breast cancer supportive care clinic was extremely crucial for my ability to obtain proper screening based on my family history.

I found about dense breast after my diagnosis of breast cancer just after my 41 birthday when I had gone for screen after finding a lump I tell all my friends to get a baseline mammogram at 40 so they can find out the density and discuss risk factors and best options for screening with their doctors. By the time I found the lump and was diagnosed it was 2.4 cm and in the lymphatic system and nodes

I feel that the patient should be heard more when expressing concerns, especially in younger women (under 40) and that more care should be put into education for young women.

I wish women under 40 could be offered screening. I feel like 35 is a better age. I feel like women's health concerns are regularly dismissed

I believe if any woman has any lumps or concerns, she should be able to book regardless of age.

This survey should include a detailed informed consent statement. It should also have been approved by an ethics committee and information of such should be provided to respondents. Further, I feel that the repeated use of the term women instead of people with breasts excludes both trans people and men who can also be at risk of breast cancer. That being said, I hope your research is informative

It has always been a positive experience

Ontario GP should be more proactive to report density to their patients. I've had 6 MRI's and my % density was only reported in 2020. This should be mandatory IMO so patients can make informed decisions for future risks/ diagnostics.

When I turned 40 I asked my doctor if there was anything I needed to do health-wise in this new decade. He said no, that mammograms aren't until 50. I can't remember if I asked if I could have one sooner, but I would like to ask that. I've always had a breast exam as part of my annual physical but I don't think I've ever been told anything about my breast density.

I think Ontario Breast screening clinics should automatically do ultrasound on women with dense breasts even if the referring physician doesn't include it on the referral.

MRI screening covered for women with dense breasts More education of family docs re: dense breast risk and the discussions around this with patient Education for technologists performing mammograms about the pain associated with having a mammogram when you have extremely dense breast tissue. It can be excruciating. Some sensitivity to this fact would be appreciated.

Supplemental screening with MRI needs to be available. All provinces should follow the Canadian association of Radiologists guidelines and screen starting at age 40. Every woman should have access to tomosynthesis Mammography

I discovered a lump in one of my breasts around the age of 20. It was benign, but for the past 8 years I have had breast ultrasounds every 6-12 months to monitor the size of the multiple adenomas in each breast. At one point I also had a biopsy. I had to figure out most of it on my own as I went. My mum helped a lot having dense breasts herself, but I only learned things because I asked my practitioners/ultrasound technicians tons of questions. I just don't think there's a lot of information out there especially for young women. I met a couple of women my age along the way who had lumpectomies, but again most of us were in a kind of private experience learning as we went, feeling fairly alone.

I still don't know enough about the issue. What makes breasts "dense"? Why me? Is this something bad or just genetic? Does it mean I am sick if I have dense breasts? So I would like to know more. I had a radiologist (Male) tell me some mumbo jumbo when I asked. Please convey "what is dense breast". And "Is it the same as large breast" or "is dense breast tissue already diseased?" When I come out of a medical visit being told I have dense breasts, I would like more info.

As mentioned earlier, breast screening needs to be started earlier as many young women are being diagnosed. I was diagnosed at age 50. It was caught very early, probably because I had had screening since age 45. Otherwise, it may have easily been overlooked. That may have saved my life.

Screening should occur younger than 40. There should be a baseline screen, density report and discussion on risk factors at age 30 or below. 40 is too late

It seems too common that younger (mid 30s), friends of mine have had cancerous lumps in their breasts and were dismissed by doctors, i think medical professionals need to be better educated on the reality of breast cancer.

I recently done my mammogram and was advised about density cat C results. This is because by request for the results. I am now waiting for a requisition for an ultrasound. This is my first time. I would like to receive results of this survey campaign. Good luck!!

It should not be so difficult to have alternate screening done if you have very large breasts and they are dense. It it a very painful process to go through and if one is willing to go through the process, it should not be denied. I realize that the cost may be more for the dense breast test, but I cannot imagine that is comparable to someone having advanced breast cancer instead. What would the cost mentally and financially be in comparison to the person and to the provider paying the bill.
Gp and mothers need to show their young daughters how to properly check.

I have to remind my health care provider to provide requisitions for mammograms and ultrasounds even though the mammogram clinic that I attend always says that I need to get retested every year because of my breast density. If the clinics were allowed to rebook women who they advise need regular screenings without the requisitions, it would make it easier.

Family history is a big factor for early breast screening, so as soon as the person asks for screening, doctors should readily and willingly send their patients for mammogram and follow up every year.

women be aware of how important it is to do self breast exams. Know our own bodies.

More discussion and information made available both through social media and health care professionals. Being able to directly book your own mammogram without a medical requisition. Stop informing people they do not need to worry about breast cancer unless there is a family history.

I received more information from the technician who did my screening than from my doctor.

We need to elevate testing for dense breasts as a proactive test to promote early detection and reduce hardship and cost

No thank u I had breast cancer already

Women need to know if they have dense breasts.

I wish I knew I had dense breasts and the risk factors associated with it before I was diagnosed with breast cancer. I feel ultrasound should be an option for those with dense breasts

Anyone with C or D density should be informed of the additional risk and switched to screening ultrasounds rather than next to useless mammograms. I've even been unable to find a private clinic that will do a screening ultrasound in BC.

Screening should be free for those of us with dense breasts

We need good public formation campaigns to reinforce the benefit of self exam, mammogram and dense breast risks.

I had my second mammogram on Dec 20th. Received a call on December 22nd to tell me I needed to return for further testing. Wasn't able to book in until after the holiday. The result was negative. The trauma caused by this process is unfair and unhealthy. If calling to say there is an issue an appointment should be immediately available for an ultrasound. In addition, Mammograms are painful and feel wrong. There has to be a better less painful way to assess breast health.

I am very happy that women can get routine mammograms. I wish more women would routinely get them. I believe at least it's a first start, then doctors breast exam at least once a year. Dense breast tissue is worth knowing about, but I hope this info won't make hesitant women more wary of getting a mammogram!

Since I turn 75 in April, I was sent a notice that I will not be eligible for a mammogram unless my doctor orders it. Guess when you get old, you're not worth the expense of a mammogram.

I'm a lucky person thanks to the breast program in Ontario I have received a letter when I turned 50 to book a mammogram and they found early stage cancer...now I have to fight every time with my oncologist to try to get an ultrasound after the mammo because I'm afraid they will miss something because of my breast density

I always had mammograms every year. I was told because they were clear I could go every 2 years. On my second year I was diagnosed with breast cancer and had surgery 2 lumpectomy and 15 rounds of radiation. I do have dense breasts

It is very frustrating to be constantly informed that I have DENSE breasts after each mammogram, yet there is no more extra screening offered/available.

If you use common sense and self check regularly, you should be fine. There is no guarantee that "Breast Screening Canada" is any more effective than that.

I have had the manual examinations as part of my annual physical each year but nothing has been explained to me.

My health care providers have been on top of this since I was 35. Alberta seems to have a very good follow up program although nothing related to breast density that I know of.

any person who feels the need should have this service available

Health care providers need to discuss results. I just got a letter with the results from the provincial screening. It contained the note that the mammo should be repeated in a year because of dense breasts. Had to look that up for myself

I hate the experience. I am 71 and have been told I have dense breasts. I decided not to have any more mammograms. There has to be a better way to determine if there is cancer in the breast tissue.

Make an ultrasound a regular part of the screening my dr always has to request this

I have had positive experiences screening in both SK and AB, with an abundance of caution to re-check anything suspicious, and regular follow-up.

After my 1st mammogram at 44 (just to get a baseline) I had no symptoms or lump etc. I was called back for supplementary. The radiologist informed me that there was a 5 percent chance I had cancer as he didn't like the look of the microcalcifications. He recommended I have a biopsy but wait for the final report if I should have one. The report in the end recommended me to have another mammo in 6 months- no biopsy. I had to advocate & my GP ordered the core biopsy. It came back cancer.

Training for GP's that it's NOT OK to deny a woman's request for a screening mammogram citing the guidelines. Educate them that it is a patient's choice and to have an actual conversation with their patient about risk factors - family and dense breasts. I don't need to see a doctor to cite guidelines, I can Google that!

Waiting is too much to book an appointment

Make sure you get a mammogram every year to be safe

Always felt that increasing age to screen was a money decision, not a health decision. Saw too many 40-49 year olds diagnosed with Breast cancer to ever support screening age starting at 50.

I am part of the Ontario Breast Screening program. I had dense breasts and required a mammogram every year. As I have gotten older my breasts became less dense and I now get a mammogram every other year. I feel it is essential for all women 40 and up begin to receive a regular mammograms and be part of the breast screening notification program.

My cancer was difficult to see even on ultrasound. Not sure how it could have been detected sooner.

I never had a screening mammogram. I had a diagnostic mammogram when I found a lump on my breast at 48 years old.

With breast cancer on both sides of my family and being of Ashkenazi ethnicity, my doctor has always taken my need for regular mammograms seriously. I also had DNA testing for the BRCA gene.

For a couple of years, I refused to have a mammogram but opted instead for a breast ultrasound. That ultrasound found an issue that a mammogram would not have found. They watched it for 2 years, but I got an all clear.

I have been diagnosed with breast cancer twice and neither time was a mammogram effective for my diagnosis. I have dense breast tissue (C) and it made it difficult to diagnose. Alternative options should be prioritized for those with dense breasts.

I recently attended the mobile screening unit in Black Diamond, Ab. Very easy and efficiently run. Made my own appointment without a requisition.

Annual mammograms for breast cancer patients should not require a referral from the dr every year.

I have had one type of cancer and am still under the age of 40. I would like to have regular screenings of all kinds and if I could book it myself it would be easier than waiting for a referral

The first mammogram I had was painful and I was treated in a rushed, aggressive manner. Then, I had to have another mammogram at the IWK, which, was very gentle and kind, but I was told in the hallway, I needed to come back for a biopsy... the biopsy was benign and we celebrated.... Two weeks later, my doctor called me and said, "oops, sorry, you have a radial scar and I don't know what that is but you need to see a surgeon". Then, the patient support person said "sorry, can't help you, I have no idea what a radial scar is". Thankfully, my surgeon was amazing and he gave me sound and compassionate advice. The surgery is done and I'm recovering. Just waiting for my biopsy results...

I was diagnosed with breast cancer at age 38. No family history. My Dr. told me that my daughter should start screening at at age 28. This is necessary to save lives.

After my mammogram, I discovered I had dense breasts so I asked for a follow up ultrasound which my doctor really encouraged me NOT to do. It was SO difficult to get her to fill out a second requisition but I made her. I believe Doctors should provide this info to women with Dense Breasts.

The mammography clinic booked me for a mammogram after 2 years when I was 69. My GP told me it should be annually, since my younger sister had breast cancer. I was able to get it after 1 year when I reminded the clinic of the family history.

I have always been able to access mammogram whenever I have had concerns but I know several friends and especially young women under forty who have not been able to. Sometimes with dire consequences. I recognize that we shouldn't screen with reckless abandon but if young women have lumps and family history they should be screened. Thanks for your efforts.

Women should be informed that they can ask to have a mammogram even though they not be in the age group we know our bodies.. we should also be told if we have dense breasts because we may have to have them examined more often

I think women should be encouraged to check them selves and be taught how.

Breast screening program in Ontario is excellent BUT the age limit of 50+ is ridiculous! It needs to back to age 40+.

If a family has a history that can be provided and shown, then health care providers should listen to patients and allow scans to women younger than 40. My grandmother died at 49 from breast cancer. My aunt was diagnosed at 45 with triple negative stage 3 breast cancer. Myself I was diagnosed at 35 stage 3 breast cancer. We came to find out through tests that we carry a genetic mutation that can be passed along through to children. My mother carries the gene but has not yet developed cancer. I fear for my children having the mutation and what they face as they grow. Screening for women with family history should be made more available.

As a woman with very dense breasts, I wish I could skip the mammograms, and only have ultrasounds for screening. I have often had to have those after the mammogram anyway, so seems unhelpful to have to have the mammogram.

My experience is that the breast screening program is vigilant for women and easy to access. They take their responsibility seriously and encourage me to as well.

The issue of screening patients with dense breasts is something that I only heard about from a friend. I have since found out that I have dense breasts, as well as a strong family history of breast cancer. I have never had a health care provider talk to me about the risk of cancer not being detected on a mammogram or offer me any alternative screening method. I know other provinces and countries have different screening methods, but BC is lagging far behind and it's a very serious issue.

If dense breast Drs should automatically do alternative testing.

Need more and more frequent mobile screening for rural and remote communities, particularly on First Nations reserves.

I have had an excellent family physician who was very pro-screening. She had retired and I now have a young male doctor. I think make family physicians may need more information and perhaps prodding to prioritize screening in Ontario for women you get than 50 who have risk factors.

I was lucky to have annual mammograms starting at age 30, due to family history, I began provincial screening at app. 48 years as a result of having colo-rectal cancer, genetic testing and risk factors. The mammograms did not detect the breast cancer, however the MRI and subsequent ultra sound detected the cancer. Mammograms are not always enough!

Skip mammogram when you have dense breasts. Why bother when you need to do ultrasound anyway

Please lower the screening in Ontario to 40 yrs old. I have had 2 cousins and 2 friends in the last 3 yrs who have been diagnosed and have zero family history. This would be life changing.

Clear discussion and debunking of new age thermography as a safe accurate screening. It worries me that this is being promoted heavily in woman's alternative health media

There is not enough information about this topic in general. The public is not educated. Doctors are not educated. It's like you turn 40 and that's the "magic" number to get screeed. Mammograms should be part of a yearly physical.

Women should be able to choose their breast screening services. I would love to know the density of my breasts

The wait times for screening appointment are way too long. Booking in July for November! Also I believe if you have dense breasts I should be able to get an ultrasound without a rec from my doctor. I know from doing a screening I have dense breasts! They should allow any woman who does to do this.

I am frustrated by having to repeatedly go through the getting a mammogram, being told that I have very dense breasts, and then having to make another appointment for a subsequent test. Why waste my time and the government's money for a test that tells me that my breasts are too dense to diagnose anything? In addition, I find mammograms excruciatingly painful . As a result, I stopped getting them years ago.

More reminders/advertising to keep it top of mind as I forget about it

Sorry I don't know if there better ways

Let a woman get screened whenever she feels she needs to, even if it's before 40 years old.

I am in a twice-yearly program because of genetic risk. I have to travel to a city and book a hotel and have a very early morning apt. with doctor follow-up. I hate it and want to drop out because it is stressful, expensive & inconvenient.

More encouragement to have regular mammograms. I started at 50 voluntarily. Breast cancer was found at a regularly scheduled mammogram at age 64. Early detection.

I think better access to information is important. There is a greater push recently in Alberta to reduce testing of various things in general such as pap smears every three years instead of annually for women in my age group. I think the drive to spend more efficiently on healthcare and the drive to reduce cost is creating the potential for greater danger for patients in order to save money. I worry the same is happening with breast screening as I wasn't told I couldn't do it, but felt I was being dissuaded.

Have doctors offices recommend physicals including mammograms.

Earlier access to mammograms before age 40 would be helpful. Most of the women I know who have battled breast cancer have been younger than 40.

More ultrasounds should be offered.

Thank you, when I turn 40 next year I will books mammogram!

I have been fortunate to have a wise MD, as a family doctor.

I was diagnosed with breast cancer at age 47 because of routine screening that I have been doing since age 35. I have both a mammogram and ultrasound sound each time and my cancer was found with the ultrasound and not by mammogram. It had only been 14 months between exams but that was enough time for me to develop a 3 cm mass where one didn't exist prior to that.

Currently, in MB the mobile breast screening program will apparently provide the breast density score but the in-hospital clinic referral system doesn't (so I've been told). Also, they are hesitant to go straight to ultrasound for dense breasts without making you do a mammogram first - because of MB health guidelines.

Thank you for this survey and for advocating for women's health. I plan to get a mammogram soon.

Women with dense breasts should be able to self refer AND should be able to get an appointment in a timely fashion NOT have to wait a year.

Need to enable those without primary health care providers to access screening. It is difficult to find a physician but everyone needs access

Since I'm only 35, and mammogram is not yet indicated for me, I'd appreciate self-screening info (ie how to do a physical check on myself) as well as breast cancer stats and info specific to my age group. I strongly feel that women should be screened at age 40 and that they should be made aware of their breast density and the risks associated with more dense breasts

I am 76. My doctor told me I no longer will be monitored / screened for breast cancer. The breast cancer can return. Is my life no longer considered important because of my age? Holding on to the guidelines as much as some doctors do, puts more young women at risk of a late/delayed diagnosis and death. It's absolutely frustrating, navigating this here ..

Just more talk from our doctors so that we could be more informed on the whole topic would be a good start from a younger age leading up to the age of needing these procedures.

I have 2 palpable lumps. Confirmed by 1 nurse. Then 1 dr. 1 year apart. I'm being refused a breast MRI. Bc my mammogram of my used to be heterogeneously dense now moderateky dense breast tr issue, says birads 1. Even tho my mother and twin both had b.c. before e 50. My auntie died at 40. Found cancer at 36. I am 43. Have smoked over 25 years. Many other risk factors. Thankyou for the work you do. The gov guidelines in Ontario are going to stop allowing the y mom a mammogram after 75. Shes more active than i am, but cost benefot to the gov = money trumps my mum, and all yours. I would like the option to get a mammogram now, in my 30's

Women with dense breasts should be able to have additional screening.

My first experience resulted like a blueprint. My doctor decided to watch and wait. When mammogram machines were available, I had one yearly. The results as follows; stage One, 1997; Stage one recurrence?, 2006, mastectomy; Stage One 2014, mastectomy. All cancers found by mammogram. I God for mammograms.

More awareness for young women, both at the public and health care level. A times breast cancer symptoms are dismissed because the patient is “too” young to develop breast cancer.

I feel mammograms are definitely not effective on dense breast tissue. I found a breast lump that my mammogram didn't pick up & it turned out to be cancer.

I moved from BC to ON and found a completely different experience in each regarding my breast health and accessing mammograms. I recently waiting from the beginning of March until the end of May to get a mammogram after finding an abnormality myself. Totally unacceptable wait and yes, it was breast cancer.

Walk in doctors should be more conscious of potential breast cancer in young women rather than pass them off as having dense breasts. I was stage 4 of 4 but was told my breast was dense.

Let women know their breast density

Allow women who have a family history and/or dense breasts to be screened as often as they want. E.g. 6 months or the age they determine.

My 2.5 cm lump was found within millimeters of my chest wall. I have small, but dense breasts. I believe if the radiographers had been trained to look more carefully at the mammograms of women with dense breasts, I might not have lost my breast. However, I am very grateful that I did have excellent medical care once the lump was found and now 22 years later I am in very good health. Please see my earlier comments re earlier screening.

I miss having a breast examination done in person at the time of my mammogram

Also use ultrasound

Was sent for a mammography and an ultrasound in Quebec to make sure nothing for miss. Waiting was about 1 month.

Would love to have access through a website or email subscription to help with information and decisions

Despite my breast density being high and my sister having breast cancer, I can't get more frequent mammograms or ultra sound.

I was impressed with the speed at which I was referred for a more detailed ultrasound mammogram after a regular mammogram.. That is when I found out that I have dense breasts which make it more difficult to detect abnormalities. I think it should be standard across Canada starting at age 40.

I am currently part of a 5 year study of women with dense breasts and in the control group using the current mammogram screening machines for my yearly mammogram. I think I am in year 4. Waiting on my mammogram. At 39 I found a lump on my left breast. This triggered all the testing and was diagnosed with cystic breasts and dense breasts. I have had yearly monitoring since. The study is trialling a new machine for women with dense breasts.

My 3 mammogram experiences have been amazing. I have a sister, 55, who refuses to get a mammogram because she fears the pain and uses the excuse that she hear mammograms can cause cancer by squeezing a dormant cancer cell into activity! So I would say that there is unscientific information out there. Thank you for your work.

I had a mammogram years ago after I was having weird nipple discharge. The mammogram didn't show anything abnormal. My doctor said that it's ok for my breasts to feel lumpy, that it's supposed to feel like a bag of grapes inside. Made me feel like whats the point of doing self breast exams because they always feel lumpy. I had no idea I could book my own mammogram and having lost loved ones to breast cancer I appreciate this info very much. Thank you!

By having annual mammograms and to perform regular self check on your breasts.

Keep up the good work educating women regarding their health and advocating for better screening.

I know almost nothing about breast screening, I feel like more information about this should be provided to me by my doctor.

My mammogram experience was awful. I was extremely nervous as I found a lump in my breast and while the technician told me "I was in charge and to let her know if I was in pain" it felt like I was inconveniencing her as her goal was to do it as quickly as possible. I realized during my second mammogram that she did not adjust the height of the machine properly. I had bruises on my rib cage for weeks. I expected it to be uncomfortable due to compression but I suppose I thought that she would understand the level of anxiety a patient feels during this procedure, especially when they are there because of a lump.

Take women seriously. If there is an undiagnosed anomaly do the tests necessary to diagnose. Don't allow the mammogram to be definitive if there is other evidence of concern. In my case a palpable lump evident on ultrasound but mammogram "clear". Women should not have to fight to get the tests necessary for a diagnosis.

I've always been pleased with the process and care received. I receive reminders to book appointments and follow-ups.

technology that does not hurt so much when they do the exam.

My doctor did not recommend a mammogram because of the stress caused by potential false positive for younger patients...

I feel it can be improved by letting every woman know if her breasts are considered dense or not and what consequences can arise from that and what she should look for.

Should women with dense breasts also have MRI?

It should be done on a more regular basis. once per year. It used to be through our drs. to set it up but now in Ont. it is up to the centre to book it, unless we find something unusual. We shouldn't have to beg for a screening. There should be a general # that can be called to book a screening.

started screening in 2002 and not told of lump for six years. radiologist later said we can't biopsy everything.

Allow us to book our own mammograms and cut the wait for physician referral.

At 38 I told my family dr many times that I had pain in my breast. He did not send me for a mammogram. By 39 I had stage 3 IDC triple positive HER2+. Multi focal 18 cm long tumor. 3 children under 5 years old I had to undergo chemo radiation and 4 surgeries. I was advocating for myself but was not able to get anyone to listen to me. That tumor grew for almost 2 years before I could get a mammogram.

Women should be able to have screening early and regularly....yearly. My cancer would have been more advanced if I had not had yearly screening

Early screening means early detection. Many of the BC survivors I know were diagnosed before the age at which screening started. Who decided 50 was the earliest age, or 40?

My cancer wasn't my picked up on a mammo, only by ultrasound. Women should also have this test available to them.

Was not aware of the additional risks with dense breast tissue and cysts.

Although I had significant breast cancer some years ago, and I still have very dense breasts, the Screening program at Juravinski always refuses to do ultrasound in addition to the mamogram.

Ability for self booking and GP office should have access to mail out this education to patients
Encourage women to get first screening earlier

I think if this was a screening tool for men's health there would be better/faster advancement in technology and protocols. Why hasn't someone figured out a procedure that is less painful to women. Are mammograms the best screening tools, with all the money is raised for breast cancer can we not do a better job of developing better screening protocols and technology

I may not have been given a lot of information by health providers but I do have trust in the mammography unit at my local hospital. I was called back for biopsies and follow up ultrasounds if any hint of anything was seen

I have a aunt, and 2 first cousins with breast cancer and I was denied BRCA gene testing and a mammogram because I'm young

I am satisfied with my level of care regarding breast screening and the mammogram van is regularly in my area and I am usually notified

If woman are having hormone issues or have cystic breast or dense breast etc. Should we have to wait until we are 40yrs of age. Could there not be measures taken to help woman keep an eye out and get looked at earlier so that by the time things are found its not such a bad outcome etc.

My only experience is checking on a lump I found in my breast; they did an ultrasound and everything was fine. I haven't had a mammogram before

Women need to be more aware about constant self examinations, this will prompt conversations with their health care providers

With out a family Dr it is difficult to get the results

I only found out I have dense breasts after having a radical mastectomy and chemo treatment. The mammogram technician informed me when I had a follow up on my remaining breast. Only after bringing my concerns to my breast surgeon was I given yearly MRIs on my remaining breast.

Breast screening from 40 years of age is a disservice to younger women and their families in Canada. Get 3 D imaging like the USA, found a lump with in min in US

More information on non-cancer conditions and their symptoms and treatment

After having Breast Cancer 2 years ago, I have to actively ask my family Doctor for an ultrasound as well as a mammogram, as my Oncologist will only refer me for a mammogram. I have dense breasts and my cancer was hidden.

People need to be better informed about their breasts and breast health. About the dangers of environmental hazards such as canned food and drink, excessive light at night, chemicals in sofas, etc. Also the importance of breast screening. It was at age 40 here in NS then there was talk of age 50. I had one at 40 but then didn't have another until I was sent to get one by my doctor after I had mentioned offhand about how itchy my breast had been. It saved my life.

the mammogram isn't enough - it didn't detect my breast cancer - thankfully my dr ordered an ultrasound at the same time otherwise I could have gone years and ended up with stage 4 instead of 2 - this has happened to other people for sure. Mammograms do not catch all cancer.

I think anyone who has had breast cancer should automatically be booked for yearly breast screening and contacted by phone or email, rather than having to remember and go through your healthcare provider at the appropriate time. While I was part of the after cancer care clinic at WCH I was pre-book each year for both a mammogram and a breast ultra sound. However since i am now 10 years cancer free I must remember and get a requisition from my doctor and have it faxed to WCH who then will contact me to make an appt. I'm not 100% sure if I able to book once a year, or even should do so guven I have dense breast tissue and also have a type of implant that has been linked to increased risk of a form of lymph cancer.

No other comments

I would like to see more physicians openly discussing this with patients. Women should be informed directly that they are always welcome to have a screen done, at any age.

My impression is that woman are being treated like hysterical patients - even by female health practitioners - and risks are being downplayed. Looking back at my own experience I can see that there were signs and symptoms that were missed, all while telling me that there was nothing to worry about. Until all of a sudden I had aggressive breast cancer.

Yearly mammograms for women with dense breasts are essential.

I think women with family history should have breast screening before 40.

I used to get a mammogram and an ultra sound via my doctors requisition now they will only give me a mammogram and will not allow the ultrasound.

I think it should start earlier and be the same for all provinces. It should not be something you have to ask for.

I was diagnosed at 44 and previous mammograms were "negative". In the month of May and August 1991, my mmgrams were negative even though I had a tumour behind my nipple. In October I had a needle biopsy that was malignant, followed by a mastectomy and positive lymph nodes. I obviously had dense tissue and calcifications. An ultrasound should have been a followup before October and should be part of the screen

Increased information to women. I was not aware that 75% of women who develop breast cancer have no risk factors. Also information regarding safety of Mammograms.

I would like to know what research is being done in finding another method of breast cancer screening other than a mammograms.

I am part of the Trillium screening program and the contact me regularly.

Ultrasound is a more effective method of breast cancer detection, than is a mammogram. Particularly for those with dense breast tissue.

When dense tissue is discovered, at any age, follow up screening should be offered -ultra sound, MRI, before any abnormalities (lumps etc.) are found.

All women should be able to make their own appointments especially when there is a family history.

I believe that all women should have a baseline mammogram at 40. My calcifications, although benign, were caught in the USA at 40 because I was recommended to do that baseline for future reference, even though I had no family history. Before I moved to the US, my doctor in Ontario had told me years before to start with a baseline at 50. My cancer was not caught by mammogram but that early mammogram heightened my awareness for breast cancer and the need for screening.

I think "dense" is misleading. When I discuss this issue with other women, they tend to think either "large" or "firm" breasts and erroneously think they automatically don't have dense breasts. I support the great work that you're doing!

My GP also did a follow up ultrasound when it was too difficult to see what was going on in my right breast due to dense tissue

Educated women on the limitations of the mammogram screening. My mammogram came back negative and I did not pursue further even though the skin in the area changed (nipple area thickened and then redness around the areola).

Had no clue that you could book your own appointments. I have been relying on my doctor's office to do that. I missed this year's appointment in January and have not been rebooked. I will try to make my own appointment.

Please ensure you have representation, reflect all populations, address disparities

Can't think of anything. In my experience it's been good.

Recently, I have been enrolled in regular MRI screening because of family history and my dense breasts. I also think more women should receive additional screening (US or MRI) especially if they have very dense breasts.

I only had breast screening done after finding a lump in my breast. I was then diagnosed with stage 4 breast cancer

It should be done one a year instead of every 2 years

women with dense breast should always be provided with the option for an ultrasound in addition to a mammogram.

Find a less painful mammogram

More use of MRI

I ask frequently about ultrasound in addition to mammogram but thus far, my doctor does not feel it's warranted on a routine basis, in the absence of a suspicious mammogram

I asked at my last appointment just a week ago if an ultrasound is a better option. The technician said no. So what are better options for women with dense breasts?

Provide women with information, resources; to listen to their concerns, to give them support and start early. Time is of essence to diagnose and treat. Long waits can be fatal.

I have been blessed with having a very pro-active doctor when I went in after finding a lump. I was sent for follow-up and diagnosis within two months, and was diagnosed with Stage 1.

Breast screening should be available for all women and should be done every year if they want to.

Drs should show on some form of mannequin or something what it feels like to feel an actual lump, and talk about breast health more.

I would not have been referred for another mammogram or the MRI and biopsy if I had not been admitted to the high risk screening in Ontario after my doctor bent the rules for me.

Is ultrasound a better way to screen???

I was very grateful and impressed how quickly my mammogram, recall mammogram, surgeon referral, biopsy and results took place...all within a month timeline.

85% of breast cancer is NOT linked to genetics...women are developing this younger and younger, and mammograms are not often sensitive enough because of cystic breasts. Please help improve imaging to catch this disease early on before it becomes a stage IV.

I think I may need more testing because I have dense breasts but this doesn't seem to be an option.

Even though I found quite a significant lump, I wasn't able to get an appointment for a mammogram for 2 months later. I advocated for myself and was able to travel an hour away to another hospital to get an earlier appointment. That decision probably was the line between stage 1 and stage 2.

If I had been screened with a mammogram and ultrasound, I believe I might not have been diagnosed with breast cancer at 48. I had never had a mammogram before I found the lump in my breast that turned out to be stage 2b breast cancer.

I've heard Paula Gordon speak. She is amazing. Every country should have someone like her advocating for women!

I requested and was supported by my health care provider to have annual mammograms based on my risk factors starting at age 39. I was diagnosed with breast cancer at age 51; early detection by an annual mammogram.

It is the wait hearing about you breast screening - it takes such a long time - you are pretty well on your own - & have to advocate for yourself.

I was initially screened in 2016 (at 30 years old) with multiple cysts that were between 1- almost 2 cm. I was not informed of breast density. At that time, I was told I had fibrocystic breast. No mammograms were ordered. Fast forward to 2020, I had chest pains, change in skin and still the same lumps. I was diagnosed with Stage 3 IDC Triple Positive Breast Cancer. GPs should further investigate and not stop at ultrasounds or mammograms. Breast screening should be early and GPs should educate people on checking monthly. I think breast removal should be optional for women with strong family histories

I have not had a mammogram, because I've heard the horror stories of how much they squish your breasts. I can't imagine that being good for them. As a result, I do not know my breast density. A friend of me did tell me about the ultrasound option but that most GP's don't prescribe that as the first option. If ultrasounds are so much more accurate and pain-free..... why not make that the one and only option to ALL women. Mammograms are barbaric.

I think Health care providers need to inform this topic at any age. Yes, over 40 is more often but that doesn't mean we all are excepted of any issues before.

Thank you for continued good work on this issue. I support it.

I would like more information. It's not talked about or brought up much unless there is family history.

No comment.

I get an ultrasound and a mammogram every year because of dense breast tissue. I would like to be able to make my own appointments, instead of having to call my doctor (who is difficult to get through to) and ask them to send a req form and then wait for hospital to call back with an appointment.

Women with a history of breast cancer in their families should have access to a mammogram earlier if they feel a lump.

The staff at Breast cancer BC who do the mammograms for woman make darn sure you're only booking every two years. I believe woman need to be screened once a year- that it's our right. Especially if you have dense breasts. Why isn't this so? We know the risks increase with dense breasts!

Removing the need for health care provider referral in those provinces where this is still required. Consider locations/of screening centers. Mine in NS was and still is in a shopping center, which I've always considered a clever and practical choice...a place that can be accessed easily without the parking and protocols of a major medical center. Provide mobile testing in areas remote from major centers. Ongoing education.....like fire drills, it needs to be repeated!

I am currently fighting to have an ultrasound because I have C breast density and have been told it is only available to women who have D breast density. Even though I just lost a sister to breast cancer who had C breast density.

Breast cancer screening detected my breast cancer and I will be forever grateful. It's a wonderful program and it's definitely needed.

I only learned about breast density risk factors during screening for removal of non-cancerous papilloma. I would like to have known about this earlier as I have a greater risk but didn't know this until my mid-40's and only due to additional screenings and specialist visits.

I've heard of a heat thermography which might be a great addition to the screening for high risk people like me

I felt a lump, and 6 different Healthcare providers felt it and looked at imaging of it, and told me it was a benign cyst. I had to really insist with all 6 people that they investigate, to be sure. Finally they did a biopsy, and it was cancer. If I hadn't advocated for myself, then the cancer would still be growing inside me. We shouldn't have to advocate that hard.

Breast screening should start earlier than 40. Mid to late thirties would be even more beneficial. My aunt had stage 4 breast cancer at 37 lived with cancer for over ten years and died at the age of 50

I think the percentage or rating of density should be given to every woman in their results. I also think that if a woman only has a mammogram every 2 years, the option for an ultrasound should be given to her on alternate years so she has some sort of screening provided yearly. I think ultrasounds should be made part of routine breast screening. I have had recall mammograms for something showing up on the mammogram and they also did an ultrasound at the same time. Having routine ultrasounds would help lower recall mammograms and help women feel confident they are being screened in a detailed way. We lost a family friend to breast cancer in 2018. She had lost her mother to breast cancer when she was 7. Her mom was in her 40s when diagnosed. The exact same thing happened to our friend. She had a baby at age 40 like her mom did and developed aggressive breast cancer in both breasts when her daughter was only 2. She died 5 years later when her daughter was 7. Why she was not offered early screening is beyond me, given her family history. It was a tragedy that very well may have been caught earlier and her death may have been prevented if she had been getting screened in her 30's. I only hope that her family is proactive about educating her daughter so she is aware to start her screenings in her 30s.

I really think women need more information and the power to make their own informed decisions. What about women with implants? Thank you.

Even though I had breast cancer mammogram did not show it. Anyone with dense breast should have at least an ultrasound.

I was diagnosed with breast cancer at 40. It was a very stressful experience getting an appointment for a biopsy

Why is woman's health worth less than a mans

Women with Dense breasts should be made aware that a mammogram isn't necessarily going to find the cancer. They need to get an ultrasound on BOTH breasts!

Patients need to be listened to. As a survivor, I should not have to see my family dr every year to get a mammogram booked

When you go for your Mammogram you should be informed by the technician or medical personnel that you Do or DO NOT have dense Breast.

Beyond me why screening is restricted to these age groups. Mine was picked up on mammo...I would be dead as have primary immunodeficiency and age 74 is NOT the end of life not to mention earlier age more aggressive

I believe male doctors should talk to women about breast screening, mine has never mentioned it!
This was informative for me. I would like this information to have been shared by healthcare professionals more widely. I feel like some of this I should have learned in a survey but from my doctor or awareness campaigns.

All Canadian Women should have access like me. I have been organizing my own appts for years after receiving a reminder from the breast screening unit at Children's and Women's Hospital in Vancouver. Service has been excellent

Should not have automatic "cut-off" from regular screening at any age. Know some women who found lump age 75+ and mammogram, biopsy confirmed breast cancer. Thanks to quick treatment they are ok. Others were not so lucky because they themselves didn't find lump soon enough or didn't find lump at all and other symptoms led to breast cancer diagnosis which was very far along and no treatment worked. I don't have much to add - my screening experience was a positive one

I do think that women with dense breast who have a history of breast cancer should also periodically have an opportunity for ultrasound as an extra preventive measures.

I had breast cancer-discovered by mammogram age 65. I asked if I have dense breasts. Once told no. Once told yes. Have requested u/s during mammograms and can't get one without doctor request. My health care provider always asks for an ultrasound as well as a mammogram (due to dense tissue).

I get regular notification on getting a mammogram. Got recalled and they redid the scan but all was good.
WOMEN WITH DENSE BREAST SHOULD HAVE REGULAR ULTRASOUNDS

Even mammogram and ultrasound don't detect very small lumps. Two other small tumors were found during my mastectomy that weren't previously detected. Glad I didn't opt for a lumpectomy
Due to having dense breasts, I find the exam very painful since the pressure required to get through the dense tissue can be very painful due to the pressure required to flatten the breasts to really get a deep insight into the tissue for the examination.

Mammogram appointments are very stressful experiences after a diagnosis of breast cancer. (technicians could show more empathy I think regard) I believe screening should start at age 40. I lost 2 friends to bc in their 40s.

I feel if you have history, dense breasts or have concerns it should be easier, no mater your age, to get screened

The benefits of screening and early detection is not easily available or encouraged in the 40-49 year old range. That is crime that needs to be changed immediately.

20 years ago I had metastasized breast cancer which was missed on my mammogram 6 months before I discovered the tumour myself. With the new machines in use today it would not have been missed and as I was on hormones at the time my breasts were extremely dense. All women should have access to mammograms easily and early!!

I first learned about the risk due to dense breasts from my doctor in my thirties but when she retired my new doctor was sceptical about the link. I went on to be diagnosed with stage 3 breast cancer at age 49.

I was diagnosed with breast cancer at 43 with no family history and no genetic increase of risk.
Mammograms should be given to all women over 40
Women should get checked regularly. Once they realize they have dense breasts that should be screened with an ultrasound and MRI
I'm a breast cancer survivor. I strongly believe in mammograms. I'm a big supporter for early detection.

In my late forties/early fifties had yearly mammograms then was placed on Ontario Breast Screening program screening with mammograms once every two years.
I would hope my daughters can get a mammogram sooner than 40 since I am the only one on my family to have had breast cancer. It was quite a shock!

I think this goes hand-in-hand with promoting the importance of a yearly physical which should include breast screening... This is how my sister was just very recently diagnosed with early breast cancer.

All women irrespective of ethnicity should be screened every two years after 40

I think that access to MRI for woman with dense breasts would be appropriate as Mammograms do not always pick up cancerous tissue and my health care provider missed the boat for me and I was diagnosed stage iv Denovo after complaining about pain for 3 years. I could have been diagnosed sooner with proper screening.

I have been told that I have extremely dense breasts, so other than annual mammograms and ultrasounds, are there any other diagnostic "tests" that I should be having? Possibly even every other year? Thank you in advance for taking the time to answer this inquiry. Blessings and warmest regards, Heather Morrissey, Calgary, AB

I think it is very important that women be told of their breast density. My sister in law had a negative monogram in November and was diagnosed with late stage breast cancer the following August. Could this have been due to breast density? she was never told but if it was perhaps they could have caught her cancer earlier.

I completely agree with the flaws the the recommendations provided by the task force, I have observed many family physicians Trust and follow these guidelines and don't Always have the time to Research the issue and believe what is recommended should be followed. Also of note one physician commented that it all comes down to funding , if there is away to avoid extra resources they will find a reason, like" it causes more harm than good as anxiety and complications that arise from early screening " thats baloney!!! All my clients that I have asked which are majority of them , I have asked if they feel having a false positive breast imaging causes more harm than good, not one had agreed with that, they all feel it's better to have been investigated even after a breast biopsy, I have found very few cases if any with complications despite there being a small risk to infection. MAjority of these women are working Full time and unnecessarily will need to resort more time away from work and family to have more invasive treatments From a breast cancer that is found advanced, also many of these women work in healthcare and we continually have a shortage in Canada without illness, many of these women will take 1-1.5 years off from work to recover and many will stop work all together because if mortality or disability related to breast cancer journey. I know, through personal experience, that breast cancer may not show up on a mammogram if a woman has dense breasts.

Mammograms need to be done with ultrasounds. Both tests together. I saved my own life. Very bitter about it too.

I have dense breasts and a family history of breast cancer and was told by the radiologist I needed to be closely monitored but because I am in my 40s it was difficult to book multiple mammograms since I needed a referral each time from my family doctor.

More emphasis and assessment of individual risk rather than blanket schedules of screening

I sometimes wonder how closely the radiologists at our local hospital are studying the mammograms. Some years I would get a letter stating that I had dense breasts, and a mammogram was recommended for one year later. Other times I would get a letter not mentioning dense breasts, and a mammogram was recommended for two years later. It went back and forth like this for years and years. This made no sense to me.

Show us the pictures! Why are we never shown what our mammograms look like?

Women are capable of making informed decisions and should be given individualized care, not just standard care. Cancer is a gift and ought to be treated with great reverence.

Women with dense breasts should be given the most up to date information regarding screening protocols for them

Better tools. The use of ultrasound. My greatest concern is hearing the medical community tell us that self examination just leads to stress and doesn't save lives. It sure saved mine where mammography failed.

For years I have been part of the annual Ontario Breast Screening Program, but since COVID (2019) I have not received any communication from the program.

a program that sends out reminders to individuals by mail, when they are due for their next mammogram. I live in Ontario, went for mammogram at age 50, never received a reminder to go back. Found a lump at 53, it was Breast Cancer.

I've always felt dismissed due to my age when speaking of breast screening since I was in my 20s. Although an ultrasound was provided and then escalated to an appointment with a specialist.. the dr quickly felt my breasts and said nope you're fine all within the span of 1 minute. No further questions asked. I really do worry till this day as I feel I am developing more signs that I may have something. I may just ask for a mammogram soon.

I had dense breasts (D) yet was not told of the risks. In fact, the only reason I knew I had dense breasts was upon reading my report. When mentioned to my GYN, he did not explain the risks. Despite having started mammograms at the age of 39 and having had ultrasounds after all my mammograms, my cancer was missed. It was detected because I discovered a lump and vehemently insisted there was something abnormal. This got me a follow-up ultrasound 6 months later. I was not offered MRI screening until after my positive biopsy. MRI detected 2 tumors, not 1, with a combined size of almost 6cm. Also, my last 2 mammograms, post breast cancer have not had density written on them. I believe that MRI screening should be offered more to women with the highest breast density knowing that not all breast cancers form lumps and that the incidence of these lobular tumors is increasing and the age of the women being diagnosed with lobular cancer is decreasing. Also, breast density should be reported on all mammograms and explained to women by the doctor requisitioning the mammogram

I have had breast cancer and am thankful that my daughter was able to start getting tested at 40.

I did develop breast cancer at the age of 57... I found the lump myself. I was 6 months late for my annual screening

As I do have dense breasts, I am concerned about the accuracy of the mammograms that I receive.

I don't want to have a mammogram any more for I strongly wonder if this practice doesn't contribute to the development of cancer. I'd rather have the doctor palpate me. Now I think I will have to choose a gynecologist to do so.

I didn't know Dense breast tissue could hide breast cancer. Luckily I found the lump myself, was the size of a grape and didn't show on the mammogram. I insisted on further testing and had an ultrasound which deemed it suspicious. After a biopsy, it was deemed a faster growing cancer. After lumpectomy, was found to be in lymph nodes. From there, it became a mastectomy and reconstruction, Chemo and radiation. Then several years of Tamoxifen and AI

My regular physician was reluctant to send me for further screening when I found a mass that he believed to be only a large cyst. When the cyst continued to cause problems a doctor on call sent me for a mammogram and an ultrasound. While the mass was a cyst the ultrasound found a small tumour and I was diagnosed with stage one breast cancer. Had I not had the ultrasound the cancer would not have been found at such an early stage. After treatment my regular doctor would not continue to have ultrasounds as part of my screening as it wasn't standard. My oncologist wanted me to have yearly ultrasounds but this was only told to me verbally. I ended up switching doctors after having this one for thirty years. Not easy finding my a doctor in these times. My new doctor is female and a lot more diligent in my screening and even sent me for a breast MRI last year

In my day, didn't need a requisition for mammogram every two years. When an abnormality was seen took a year of many many mammograms to have a biopsy which was malignant.

I just turned 40 last week, but as my mom had breast cancer I'm wondering if I will be permitted for early screening. If I hadn't seen this survey I'm not sure I would have made a note to specifically ask my family doctor about this.

Not convinced filling dense breasts with radiation from mammograms doesn't cause the cancer.

I wish that I had been screened before I developed stage 3 BC with metastasis.

Screening needs to be offered at any age and if something is suspicious should be double checked before giving a diagnosis.

I have never been told I have dense breasts, however mammogram did not identify an abnormality when I could feel a lump in my breast. It wasn't until I had ultrasound and MRI that my cancer was detected. I have follow up mammogram on my other breast, but I do not trust them. I would feel more safe if I could have ultrasounds ordered rather than mammograms.

Very dense breasts - mammogram missed lump - MRI caught it

Breast Cancer found on mammogram- last year I was eligible to have one (because of my age.)- no lump could be felt.-have since had mastectomy plus treatment. now get yearly mammogram on remaining breast- ordered by Cancer clinic

I receive a reminder about booking my mammogram and the results in the mail. I don't know how long I am eligible for this screening...I'm 69

Those of us with dense breasts should have ultra sound as well as part of our screening. Many times my mammogram picked up something and I had to return for ultra sound. So stressful. I am a breast cancer survivor.

All provinces should be the same criteria for screening practices.

I had to insist that my doctor order a breast ultrasound as well as a mammogram once I was told I had very dense breasts. I only knew to do this from Dense Breasts Canada.

I think it should be standard to discuss additional screening (such as ultrasound) with women who have very dense breasts. I had to have the knowledge and bring it to my doctor's attention, and request additional screening.

Excellent here in B.C.- while I no longer have to get screening, I was made aware that I could choose to continue if I wanted to, every 2 years. I will do so.

I was being screened yearly, felt a lump contacted my breast doctor she saw me immediately, had a biopsy done, she contacted me by phone personally with the diagnosis of breast cancer and arranged for me to see a surgeon right away. I had a mastectomy and chemo sixteen years ago and have been fine since. I credit being referred to an excellent Doctor for breast cancer screening

It hurts and dense breasts are not helped with the old type of screening ultrasound should be used as well to detect tumour early

I believe it should be started when women start menstruating. I believe in a PROACTIVE approach to mammograms helps women to stay healthy and possibly live longer.

I did have DCIS and it was successfully removed. Years ago there was palpation of the breasts that went along with a mammogram. Nurses no longer provide this service. I had a mammogram in Jan. and during a routine physical at my doctors, a lump was detected. This lump was not detected in the mammogram. I feel it is vital to include palpation as part of regular breast examination by an expert. Self breast examinations are more difficult when the breasts are lumpy and or dense.

I just received a notice in the mail that I am due for a mammogram. I thought you didn't need them after 71.

Up until last year I was able to book a mammogram yearly and now I can only book biannually. I've been identified as having dense breasts and I've been sent for more intensive screening in the past. It feels as if the guidelines are based solely on my age and not previous screening results.

If you would like my true opinion as to your program and how it benefits the women that for reason not in their control works for them. My email address is jarg2635@gmail.com my name is Tara feel free to communicate

I'm a practicing ultrasound tech in Alberta. Many of my patients have no idea about breast density. I think education is so important. There needs to be better access to education so more women know about breast density. Also any women don't know they can start screening for breast cancer at 40.

Yearly screening

I think that every women should have the right to get a breast screening every year if they want to not every second year like I do right now because my doctor say so.

I felt I received very good care - from my family doctor, to the mammogram technician and the Breast Health Centre.

I had two very uncomfortable experiences at the first two mammogram clinics I was sent to. I have a great family doctor who helped me find the right place. I know many women who find their mammogram clinics and the techs to be awful experiences and they delay getting the mammograms.

More publicity. All females 40+ encouraged to have first Mammogram. Doctors tell women if they have dense breasts and how dense. Continue with screening after age 74.

Hopefully, Canada will always allow screening at any age if the patient feels she needs it.

I have been screened aggressively because of my mother's death from metastatic breast cancer at the age of 45. She, however, was not adequately treated by her physicians--having had a radical mastectomy in her early 40's in 1964, without sufficient follow-up screening of the second breast. This resulted in her early death from a metastatic brain tumour. Screening could have saved her life, and in the end, this would have been far less expensive for the health care system. The overlooking of dense breasts is a myopic change to screening guidelines which will inevitably lead to increased deaths and healthcare costs.

I felt reassured by the annual screening even though I know it doesn't guarantee early detection of cancer This is something that should be taught in health education in grade 11 and 12.

In Ontario you need special referral to OBS to have a mammogram annually. They have discontinued breast ultrasound for dense breasts

Having to wait for an ultrasound for a year for dense breast s is outrageous!!!

Do not agree the cut-off age is 74 yrs.

I recommend you add to the questionnaire the age at which a person started using Canadian health services. I moved to Canada when I was 27 so my experiences are about the Canadian context. Please continue with the hard work you are doing, women need knowledgeable and committed advocates like you. Thank you very much!

A routine physical should be done annually, covered under prov. health care plans, including a breast exam and mammogram depending on a woman's personal and family history.

By choice screening; for every body to receive the option for regular screenings above the age of 40, including at risk populations above the age of 30.

I am just wondering for a person with dense breasts, is it necessary to have both the mammogram and ultrasound. Am I being exposed to unnecessary radiation?

I have had an annual mammogram for over 20 years but have never been told breast density. My doctor said that info doesn't come to him with the mammogram results. I will ask again this year.

I was fortunate, the system worked for me, but I realize that is not everyone's experience.

No clear guidelines for women who have had a mastectomy and may have residual breast tissue. have not had problem with health care provider but with hospital testing sites who refuse to do a mammogram on post mastectomy patients.

Thanks to breast screening, very early breast cancer was detected in one of my breasts and dealt with. I was very fortunate.

I think with dense breasts it is important to get periodic MRIs and/or ultrasounds, exactly because the densities are confusing on mammograms. I haven't looked at your site but I hope you are advocating for this.

I am still not clear what to do regarding screening now that I know I have dense breasts. If I have a concern, I request an ultrasound in addition to a mammogram

Bc screening sends multiple reminder notices which is very helpful. Word of mouth- other women talking and normalizing going to get a mammogram. Yes it's uncomfortable for a moment but it's so worth it!

Perhaps those with dense breasts should have yearly screening!

Public education should be easily available and on media to help bring awareness.

Letting women contact the screening centres without a referral in all provinces would be very beneficial. Some Drs may not "feel it's necessary", but it's not their body or mental well being.

Should be able to do a mammogram beginning at age 40 and before if family history dictates.

As a high risk I went every 2 years and mammogram detects mass at same age my sister has. So Im thankful to mamogram and my GP who gave me requisition.

Screening should be encouraged and provided to all women according to guidelines and more frequently if any concerns.

I am now almost 52 so I've been for my first post-50 screening. I have lumpy breasts so I really want to be proactive. I didn't realize that I could have had screening from 40 onwards. This needs to be publicized. Screening is an opportunity for health Care Providers to inform women of their risk factors etc, and thereby set them up to look after themselves. Women are subject to BC and more aggressive Bfs at younger and younger ages, They need to be in control.

I feel it should be more frequent and more education provided to women about breast cancer.

Breast ultrasound should be done every time a mammogram is done for dense breasts. I had to insist with my HCP that they be done at the same time rather than sequentially

Persons with some form of abnormal density should be able to get regular screening. They should not have to pay if their doctor wants it monitored more frequently.

I know you cannot force a woman to have mammo. A lot of women who do have them do not go back for the results. By then it's too late. I found my own lump which was cancer and have always kept up my BSE's every month and always ask for a mammo since. Had breast cancer in 1988. Very blessed when no new problems arise.

Breast cancer screening has been overlooked far too long for women and men SHOULD not be excluded in this fight! More research alternatives on screening processes should be forefront and explored

Up until recently, I was having mammograms and ultrasounds twice a year due to my breast density. Now that the breast screening guidelines have changed, I have been told only need to go every two years. I really don't understand why the guidelines changed and I am concerned it will be to my detriment. Also, mammograms are not pleasant and I often wonder why an easier method of screening has not been developed.

I feel the health system does a pretty good job of keeping track of when you are eligible for your exam. I am in program and get my results sent to me in paper form and on my health app with Women's College Hospital.

I was very lucky to be a part of the familial breast screening program at Mount Sinai and later to be in the breast screening program at Sunnybrook Hospital. Wonderful doctors at Sunnybrook, perhaps because there're all women?

I wish we had an ability to be more proactive. In people with strong family history and dense breasts like me I wish I could have more than the old standard mammograms and could add ultrasound and/or MRI. It's very frustrating

Sometimes it is not the screening but the actual ones who are reading the results and not listening to what is being told. I was told Breast Cancer was NOT painful I can tell you that was simply not true. My first and second Mammogram and Ultrasound recommended I go back in a year, I would be dead.

If more women had family doctors who they could see in a timely manner or be able to book their own appointments without a referral that would be a good start

Brave had breast cancer twice—10 years apart. Each time it was small and only needed lumpectomy and radiation. The reason for early detection was yearly mammogram. It is absolutely essential for all women. No history in my family No palpable lump—mammogram detected it. More media coverage on this may be helpful to women. Yearly checks..

I would like mammograms to start younger for everyone - no matter your location, ethnicity or tissue type. Earlier is better!

More awareness of how to get screened. I assumed I had to see my doctor for a referral and had to be at least 50. It has never been brought up. Perhaps a notice to women on their 40th birthday that they can get screened would be helpful.

Some techs could go a little little on the clamping. That 1mm extra turn isn't going to change diagnosis but can be painful enough women don't go back for recheck.

If women are young and have dense breasts and have a lump they they can feel, I think a mammogram and MRI should be booked, since it is known that mammograms can miss breast cancer on dense breasts. I had a mammogram, then biopsy, then MRI, then MRI biopsy. I felt this delayed my treatment, although I am thankful I had the appropriate testing done.

I would like to see every doctor discuss what breast density means to a woman's risk factors for breast cancer. I think it should be the protocol after a woman's first mammo.

Am only allowed every two years but being adopted no history should be able to have yearly because of dense breasts mammograms are not helpful for me and I always end up having an ultrasound, so no point in the mammogram

In B.C. patients and their doctors are not able to request an ultrasound exam of their breasts as a supplement to mammogram or a substitute to it if there are legitimate concerns about having a mammogram. I think there should be more flexibility for patients with the support of a doctor. Every woman should be able to begin screening at age 40 and have a mammogram every year. Women under 40 with a strong family history should be able to start screening as per family history.

I have learned (like a lot of women) of the risks, the benefits of early detection the hard way through loss of a friend and my sisters diagnosis. There is much work to do to inform. There is a lot of misinformation. I have advocated for others (being that squeaky wheel) and learning through the misfortune of others- this is not the way to be informed.

I think all women with dense breasts should also have ultrasound screening in addition to mammograms. I know of some women who's cancers didn't show up on mammograms but were later shown on ultrasound.

In Ontario, for some bizarre reason, automatically offered screening stopped at age 70 or 74 or some such, but it appears this has changed, since I recently received a call saying it was time for my next screening, and I am 76.

I feel any woman Any age with concerns should have a mammogram if she feels she needs one

Routine mammogram was how my cancer was discovered. At that time I had no knowledge about dense breast tissue which I apparently had.

I've read articles claiming that the compression and radiation during a mammogram can be more harmful than beneficial. With so much info available these days, it's hard for many to know what to believe.

Women with dense breasts BIRADS C & D (50% of all women) need mammogram AND ultrasound; women need YEARLY mammogram age 45-55; In BC, women are only allowed mammogram every 2 yrs once they are 50 yrs old. Majority of breast cancer occurs in women in their 50s.

I was referred for a mammogram by a medicentre doctor who did my pap exam. She was an international medical graduate and strongly emphasized the need for women over 40 to get mammograms. When I followed up later with my own GP, that doctor dismissed the other one's concerns and reiterated the Canadian standards for mammograms (over age of 50). This was in Edmonton

I would recommend that once a woman has been confirmed for dense breasts, these women should be screened more frequently or regularly.

After age 50yrs I feel women should be encouraged to go yearly for a mammogram. I was encouraged to go every two years and did so. And within a two year period I went from a healthy looking breast to having extensive DCIS, grade 3 with micro invasion. I required a mastectomy and sentinel lymph node biopsy.

Encourage women of all ages to do monthly self screening breast exams.

I have been getting annual mammograms as well as ultrasounds every year since I turned 50. I have dense breasts so the ultrasound is done

Women w/ dense breasts should be given information to be able to ensure the option of appropriate care is available and advocacy to access related screening and support.

N/A

Women need to become more educated, which should be initiated by their GP.

I felt dismissed in my concerns about a mammogram being insufficient screening when I have dense breasts. My doctor refused to order a breast ultrasound. I am not sure if more education for doctors is required to overcome this problem. Or if the government needs to allocate the budget to allow doctors to order the tests that are indeed required. I find the Canadian health care system to be too reactive. More screening is required. For breast cancer and for other diseases that affect many. I want the health care system to be proactive and focus more on preventing illness. I feel NGOs do a great job at that. Not so much the health care system itself. Thank you for continuing to advocate for all of us. Blessings. Stay safe and healthy.

I have large breasts and find mammograms extremely painful. Why are ultrasound scans not used?

We should encourage all women to screen for breast cancer. I am 82 and called on my own and discovered that they were unclear on the results and I will be retested in 6 months.

Over 74 .. risk free!

All of Canada should be age 40 to start mammograms. If family history of breast cancer then it should be age 35.

Women should have a baseline mammogram around age 30 to establish what is normal for their body

I have had very good care concerning breast screening, identified with dense breast and also having 2 biopsies for areas of concern. I get a notice ever year or 2 for additional screening. I am concerned with the fact that my breasts are very dense.

Based on me breast cancer screening in my forties helped find breast cancer early. The doctor said without the screening we would never had known you had breast cancer. I asked for early screening in my forties as I had no family history to draw in as I was adopted at birth.

We need to be told of our breast density and given enhanced testing accordingly. I didn't know that mammograms aren't effective tests for women with breast cancer- now after being diagnosed, I do. So angry.

Even though the tech could tell me that I have dense breast tissue, the conversation went no further. I felt quite disappointed.

I have had periodic screenings over the years. In 2018 at age 71, I went for a screening and was shown to have a lump. I had surgery and radiation. I take medication and have yearly mammograms. I am cancer free as of the last mammogram

I only learned about breast density and mammograms after I was diagnosed with breast cancer at age 36. There is no history in my family so I didnt know about screening till I found a lump myself.

Early detection is necessary I found several lumps in my breast and was actually discouraged to get a mammogram. Everything was fine.i discovered I have cysts and dense breast..however my rn minimized my concerns. It should be a womens choice to get screening done and when they feel there is something wrong with their body.

Ultrasound, not a mammogram, found by breast cancer. But an ultrasound has to be specific on the requisition, otherwise the lab won't do it, even if they tell you that you have dense breasts. Women should know a mammogram may not detect breast cancer.

Earlier age to start screening. Esp if family history

Importance of using ultrasound WITH mammograms. I should not have to argue for it.

Early detection can save lives. Not only should mammograms be more readily available, there should be more publicity for regular self checking for lumps and changes

I have had mixed messages as to wheter or not I have dense breasts. Some technicians say I do others say I dont! Need clarification as a small breat cyst is being followed for some years now

I would like to see 40 be the age to commence screening.

Make mammograms less painful with up to date equipment and well trained technicians

1. Listen to pts, younger women are discovering ca and MD's not listening 2. If history of dense breast tomography and u/s should be done 3. Regular mammogram may not be sufficient to detect breast ca 4. Physicians should listen to pts re: side effects from hormone meds

Articles in woman's magazines about dense breasts may help Spread the word...?

I am 74 years old and my doctor says I am not eligible for a mammogram. This is not acceptable

Appreciate the reminder every 2 years!

My screening mammogram at age 50 was clear, at 52 the screening showed a lump. That started the process of further tests, diagnosis, and treatment. It was a small lump which could not be felt. I feel that the screening saved my life by catching my cancer early. I tell everyone I know to have the screening done.

I feel there should not be an age when women are encouraged to stop having mammograms. My mother was diagnosed at age 75 age. She wouldn't have known about her cancer if she stopped getting a mammogram at 74.

My daughter (age 42) had to ask her doctor several times to get a mammogram even though I have had a mastectomy at age 44. We felt VERY STRONGLY that she should have got one at age 40. She did get one finally at age 41.

I was only notified that I have dense breast tissue 4 years ago Would have liked to have known much sooner

Thank you for the survey. It will really help to all women. Really appreciate.

To have all women go early age to have mamogram tests and make the women aware whether they have dense breast or not , to make them extra aware of a higher risk

Less scare mongering about the *pain* of a mammogram. It is much improved in the equipment design (although I am guilty of complaining about acute corners on the table in my day).

Thank you for creating and distributing this survey and advocating for women. Breast screening should be a part of every women's health program starting in their 20's. Awareness of symptoms and self testing is critical as well as support from doctors and the healthcare system.

I had a negative mammogram and found a lump in my breast three months later. It was not an aggressive cancer.

If a women has talked with her doctor about concerns with her breasts and suspicion of changes or suspected lumps then she should be given the referral. Age shouldn't be a factor.

I only found out my breast density because I asked my doctor because I read about it in social media. In the health care system I find it happens much too often that I only find out something important because I realized enough to ask the doctor myself.

Keep doing what you are doing. Great work in educating.

My best friend has dense breasts and was diagnosed with breast cancer 5 years ago at the age of 53. She has been my main source of education on breast density. She had her mammograms' on a regular basis. Basically looking for a snowflake in a snow storm.

I have dense breasts as determined by a mammogram and referral by the radiologist to a Diet and Breast Cancer study - I participated in that for 7 years until it was disbanded. It was through Dr. Boyd at Princess Margaret Hospital. One recommendation was to have 3 D mammography which I personally paid for in Toronto twice. Now I can no longer afford it. It is not available thru OHIP for me. I have not had BC and am unable to find out my exact breast density - but it is very high or I would not have been referred to that study. My doctor says not to worry. On another note, my adopted daughter is 41 and cannot get a mammogram until she is 50 - we can't even pay for one. She has no idea if her birth family had a history of BC. She may go to Toronto and pay for a 3 D mammogram but it's very expensive and not nearby. Thank you for all your efforts to help women get early detection of BC. Being in that diet study really helped me to have a healthy lifestyle and my family too.

Without doctor referral as of age 40 in all provinces. Also early screening for young women whose mother other clothes family relative has been diagnosed with breast cancer.

I'd like to see breast screening go back to the old way where a staff member, who checks breasts all day every day, does a manual exam. I felt confident that the combination of breast self exams, Cancer Care staff exams and mammograms gave me the best chance of finding something early.

I have heard of women younger than 40 getting breast cancer, so I feel the age for screening should be even earlier than 40 for those with risk factors, and an option for all women at 40+, not 50. That's too late.

I had a mammogram 2 years ago that showed that my right breast had something so they wanted to redo it. Turns out I insisted they check my left breast as I felt something and only after going to a special clinic on their ultra sound did they see something on my left breast which turned out to be stage 1 and I was operated after then given radiation treatment

My mom was diagnosed with breast cancer (no risk factors) from a mammogram but it had been 2 years since her last since her province only did them biannually. I feel if earlier, she would have had found it sooner. I have cat D density breast tissue and pay privately for an MRI because I wasn't confident in mammogram alone and my physician wouldn't give requisition for ultrasound. I am ultimately responsible for my own health, so I will alternate between mammogram and MRI (paying out of pocket) going forward.

I dunno, shouldn't I be contacted to be notified I can get a mammogram done...would be nice.

Years back I started with mammograms because I have a lump which was benign. Ultrasound should be an option seeing that I have implants and do not want to do a mammogram at my own risk. Reason why I'm avoiding a mammogram.

Regular Breast screening since the age of 40 enabled a detection of a possible cancerous cyst, that after a partial mastectomy luckily revealed it to be a non cancerous fibroid. Improvements in detecting technologies should be ongoing.

Screening is necessary at a much younger age than even 40 since my diagnosis this June I have met many women in their late 20's and 30's that have been diagnosed as well as a few that were diagnosed while pregnant. I feel age 40 is too late for many of us!

The tests are quick and easy.

I feel a woman should be able to ask for a monogram regardless of her age

I feel all provinces should lower the age for mammograms. I have a wonderful doctor who sent me for mine and I was later diagnosed with HER2+ breast cancer. The cancer I had was extremely aggressive but hadn't started that way. If I had been able to have a mammogram at 40 a less invasive tumour would have been found according to my breast surgeon.

A routine mammogram in March caught a lump in my breast which even the Dr could not feel. I had surgery in April and am undergoing treatment as required
education and awareness must increase...

I believe that Quebec should recommend mammograms starting at the age of 40 at least.

This should be something regularly discussed with health care providers. In addition, women should be taught how to properly check their breasts for abnormalities. In my opinion, this education should start in high school as part of a comprehensive health education curriculum.

Start younger. Educate and Advise on density as a matter of course.

My lack of mammograms before I discovered lump was my own decision - not the fault of doctors.

I am surprised to learn that a mammogram is my choice. I felt like my doctor discouraged me from getting one. My breast tissue is dense and I want to her to check on a lump that she said was an ingrown hair.

Ultra sound confirmed my cancer. It's quick and non-invasive. Comparable staffing and probably less expensive than mammos. Could be part of post-natal care to create a baseline and start the narrative. Could be part of 10 year booster vaccinations provided by public health (once the pandemic is over...) Increase education in junior high- all genders- as part of health programs. Encourage all genders and all ages to spend a few minutes each month looking in the mirror to get familiar with their breasts. If you don't know what you're looking at you won't notice changes. All of these issues were brought to me as a mastectomy and compression fitter, a parent and as a survivor. Take advantage of every opportunity, especially the free ones, to make a plug for awareness. Eventually the stigma will ease and the actions will become normal and usual, like wearing a mask to prevent infection!

I think breast screening should be made available to women prior to the age of 40

my breast screening experience has always been excellent and professional.

Honestly, like a pap test it should be something that is done once your body has matured. Every 3 years do one. This way you can also track someone's breasts and catch anything unusual even sooner. Breast Cancer doesn't just effect people over 40. I have a few friends who had it in their 20s but where told they were too young to have it. They did not stop pushing and finally had it confirmed. Start screening sooner. Make it a regular thing. Stop with the over 40 mentality, yes it is a significantly higher risk but Cancer doesn't know age.

I think everyone over age 40 should be able to book their own mammogram appointments.

I think there needs to be more education earlier for women in general.

Know your breast density and then do a mammogram and US test

I had a lump at age 40 and quickly got in to Radco in Winnipeg for a mammogram the next week and was also able to quickly get an US immediately following the mammogram and a referral to a surgeon to have a biopsy done. I was very happy with the quick response!

Information should be sent out so women over 40 know they can request a screening.

My health care provider requests breast MRI every second year. I am ultimately responsible for my own health and working with her I feel my risks are well managed.

I believe breast screening is extremely important and I appreciate the additional information about breast density now included on the screening results. Sadly I've also noticed that the wait time for a mammogram appt has really increased.

Thank you for doing this for all women in Canada. My sis passed away at age 23 due to ovarian cancer so any preventative measures I can get I take it. So grateful for your work.

My sister has stage 4 breast cancer with 2 mastectomies and breast reconstruction. It's unfortunate that not all cancer cells were caught. It has taken up host in her brain, bones and liver. She's has been handling it for 10 years. She's in alot of support groups, sees a naturopathic doctor. I myself have had some cyst like areas my doctor is on top of. I'm followed up with an mri and mammogram. Thanks for letting me comment

Breast screening should be available for each women at 40 years old, without a doctor's reference

I believe mammograms etc. Should start at an earlier age

More information needs to be put out there of the higher incidence of breast cancer for women with dense breasts.

I have never had a breast screening.

Personally I don't want any more.mammograms I just want ultrasounds because that is what caught my cancer. My mammogram was clear.

All women should be able to get screened despite her history- better to catch early

there was no history of breast cancer in my family, so was screened for heart problems. I was not offered a mammogram, but found my lump at age 46...stage 3. screening should be done earlier..even age 45

GP's could do a hands-on demo of manual breast check if helpful to patient

had a scare earlier this spring. i was asked to come back. appointment wasn't for a month. very anxious to have women wait that long - especially if it's a recall. can we try to shorten the wait time.

Everyone over 40

Always found the technicians extremely professional, sensitive and comforting. Unlike many, I find the experience easy and have very little discomfort.

I've had excellent care both times I had breast cancer. (2004 & 2016) I can't say enough about having the screenings annually & earlier than 50.

Early screening is important! If I waited to have my mammo close to home, I would have had to wait 6-7 months! That's not right! I thankfully found an appt 3 weeks away

I have had mammos since I was 30 because of my sister's breast cancer at a very young age. I receive a reminder card in the mail every year from the office where I get the mammogram done.

Women should know more about dense breast.

yes

I found a lump at age 39 And was sent for a mammogram. The lump turned out to be a fatty deposit of some sort, but the screening place suggested that I be screened yearly. Without a history of breast cancer, my doctor felt that a yearly screening was unnecessary as I wasn't 40 yet. 2 years later I discovered a lump in my armpit, and was diagnosed with breast cancer.

I think women should be screened as young as age 25 Today more young women are being diagnosed with breast cancer than ever before;therefore early detection is vital

I have no comment. I think I have been well looked after. My sister had breast cancer and I am now screened regularly.

Women should have a density screening at 35 years old in order to specifically find out their density so as to be aware of their risk factors

very painful!

Encourage earlier screening (shocked how many women I know under age 50 with cancer!), more self exam education and breast health awareness

Just had dinner last night with my breasties. We all feel that two things are missing: care about peace of mind ergo...they do not listen to the patient who has concerns. Need better dense breast screening and more information to women that one mammogram every year is important after 40. Every two years is the norm because the odds are slightbut I know of too many people who pushed for one a year and found cancer . Or they pushed for a biopsy on an allegedly benign cyst and cancer was found. We should not play financial roulette with women's lives. The costs of more mammograms must be considered in the light of costs of treatment and death of not doing a yearly mammogram, Finally....does it really have to be so painful!

Thank you for conducting this survey. I hope it amounts to something worthwhile & does not end in another pile of unused information.

I would like to see breast screening allowed at age 25

Screenings should be allowed before 40 years old

Women in their 30s should feel comfortable about asking to get mammograms. I am constantly refused and dismissed during doctor visits. Reason is due to my age. I've had two friends under the age of 30 who were diagnosed with breast cancer. Both their doctors also dismissed their concerns.

I had no risk factors and was told by my doctor that there was no benefit of having a screening before the age of 50.

Women have the right to all their breast health information. If they have dense breasts they should be given access to ultrasound or MRI... automatically, without jumping through hoops. They should also be given them in a timely manner.

Probably should be every year instead of every 2 years. I had 4 cancer sites I would think if I would have had a mammogram yearly this cancer would have been detected early

I didn't think I was at risk since there was no family history. Perhaps if doctors make a more concerted effort to educate their patients I may have taken it more seriously. Also the mammogram is very painful to someone with large breasts which makes it harder to go back for another if you don't understand the risks especially if there is a family history woman at any age should be prescreened

Breast density notification for all Canadian women, yearly mammograms and additional screening for women with dense breast, screening starting at 40.

Early education for all women

Women should be aware of their density and risks. I was diagnosed with BC.

Since my own experience of breast cancer, I have learned that in Alberta, for example, it is recommended that women with dense breasts have both a yearly screening mammogram and ultrasound. That is not the case in Ontario, where I live. It should be a countrywide measure to have both types of screening for women with dense breasts. I had an all-clear mammogram, but no ultrasound, nine months before my cancer diagnosis, which does not include the time before the diagnosis in which I had symptoms. I can't help but wonder if my cancer would have been detected earlier if I had had an ultrasound at the time of my mammogram.

As a plus-75 woman I no longer am part of the screening programme in Winnipeg; should I be concerned? Very important to know about dense breasts and that you should also have ultrasound

As mentioned in my previous comments I had breast cancer (dx'd two years ago). Even though I have dense breast my GP dismissed the lump I found saying it was just dense tissue. Months later I asked for an ultrasound and he said it wouldn't be useful and told me to call for a mammogram (though he still seemed doubtful it was anything). It was cancer! His ignorance and my trust of his expertise left me angry, distressed and embarrassed (for not trusting myself). GPs need to be educated about dense breast (and the need to always investigate lumps!). They also need to be educated about the role of ultrasounds. Ultrasounds should also be part of the regular screening for women with dense breasts. Even after having had cancer I still had to push for ultrasound of my other remaining breast. Thank you for your work!

I was diagnosed with triple negative breast cancer in September 2020. The mammogram showed the tumour as ok - it is really important for the ultrasound (mine was done right after my mammogram so no time lost in detection - I was lucky)

Far more education regarding dense breast tissue has to be done especially with younger women so they get in the habit of doing monthly checks and take this seriously.

I believe women need to be educated about the risk of breast density. Also women should be able to book their own screening (without doc's req) when they suspect any changes in their breast or have any concerns - Canada wide.

I am upset that family physicians no longer do breast exams during a physical. A lot of lumps will be missed with this new practice.

Allow women to book their own mammograms at any age. Young women are too often told to "not worry", they are "too young" to get breast cancer or it's too rare to be tested when they have symptoms that are concerning.

Screening saves lives and should be offered to all adult women. I have just been diagnosed with a tumour I couldn't feel and neither could the surgeon who will be performing my surgery.

More info on dense breasts

Last year I diagnosed myself with Inflammatory Breast Cancer (formally diagnosed as Her2+) after waiting 3 years before going for my regular mammogram. The system of booking appointment had changed to a central system where I had an extremely long wait on the phone line. I decided to postpone the attempt after my return from Florida in the spring. By that time, I was diagnosed with breast cancer.

Women should be told that their breasts are dense and that they should get an ultrasound yearly with the mammogram if the breasts are dense.

I had 2 lumps removed they were non cancerous. I was given a mamogram every year but not digital. When I asked to go to the hospital for a digital one my Doctor refused. I pretended to have a lump to go. I shouldnt have to do that

I am positive that if I had not had one tumour that was high that I could feel, my BC would have taken years and years to diagnose. In fact, it may have already been there for years. Better screening for young women with dense breasts is needed. I will advocate.

I was never told I had dense breasts, not even after my diagnostic mammogram. I found a line on my online results that made reference to it and had to research it myself. Medical community should be communicating this to women directly. Thank you for your work in promoting awareness!

Info on what else I can do for screening because I have dense tissue

Density issues never in my 35 yrs mammo experience, are discussed or given range number in radiology reports/assume they want to save \$ quota adhoc. Awful. My post 6 month radiation mammo would not give me US, radiologist there said I did not qualify. I have known of my moderate dense breasts for 35yrs and always had US under different care!!!

I called my GP a lump but did not get a mammogram until 3 months later, and a mastectomy 7 months later. Reducing this delay would have been important.

The age for screening should be earlier. If I had waited until 50, my diagnosis might have been cancer.

Very happy with the way things are done in BC. I feel that if a woman asks for a screening, it should be provided. A woman knows her body, she should not be denied her request.

Girls are maturing much earlier ...at age 10 and 11.....I think screening should start much earlier than 40....- 30 is a good age to start and 20 years old if family history

My recent exam went well. Quick results. No issues at this time. Thank you.

Many women say they don't have mammograms because they are afraid of the pain.

I believe my health care provider should have sent me for further screening once realizing that I have dense breasts and was proactive in telling me that I have a higher risk of breast cancer. Instead I came home and googled away. Very disappointing.

The climate crisis has taken over all of my activism energy so I have not paid much attention to the most recent developments wrt to the guidelines in Canada. That said, I remember being angry with the guidelines that were released a couple of years ago and I appreciated that DBC spoke up against the new guidelines. I have a friend in Australia who seems to receive better screening options, although I don't know her medical history so that could be the reason. My apologies if DBC has already done this work and I am simply not aware of it but perhaps DBC could look at the breast screening guidelines in Britain, Australia, New Zealand compared to Canada's. New Zealand seems to get it right these days.

I had 8 mammograms one day about 10 years ago as the Radiologist just couldn't seem to get past something on the mammogram. Two years ago I was diagnosed with Acute Invasive Ductal Breast Cancer. The cancer was very small, but I sometimes wonder if it was starting to grow 10 years ago!

I feel that getting a mammogram under 40 is too difficult even if you present with symptoms. Most doctors don't take it seriously enough and as a result it progresses before surgery. Also I feel that MRI and other imaging techniques that use minimal to no radiation (like thermal heat scans) should be more readily available for women. My breast cancer was not detected on my mammogram. The only reason it was caught was by MRI and ultrasound but even then they saw it and were looking at something else. Didn't take a biopsy and 6 months later it had grown, was staged as 1a but after surgery was 2a. I wish they had of done the biopsy when they first saw it but they said it was likely fibrous tissue. It was lobular BC that has since moved to my spine. More money needs to be spent on stage 4 cancer, understanding why 1/3 of early BC goes to stage 4 and how to better treat it so we live longer, and have better quality of life - because stage 4 treatments are hard. Tamoxifen was hard. Aging 40 years in 2-3 years with joint pain, muscle pain, lack of sleep, anxiety, bowel issues - it is HARD

I appreciate this survey. I appreciate the location of a clinic near me in rural Ontario.

I believe there should be screenings at 40, genetic workups with a view to prophylactic mastectomies.

preventative care is the best care. th

I'm 52 and just got a screening last year, after getting Ontario provincial letter. Didn't realize it was free or recommended after 50. I would've gotten one in my 40's had I known I could have asked for a screening. Results were fine, but still would've been nice to get the screening earlier, either 30's or 40's.

Every woman should do breast screening after age 40 for prevention.

Include breast density education fir screening technicians to allow them to provide information to women who are having their screening done. Make the conversation a regular part of screening Educate GP's as well

More funding for early detection is needed. Being told that self breast exams worry women about false findings and isn't something that should be done, worries me. Most of my friends that found out they had BC was from finding something at home and getting it checked. Especially the ones with dense breast tissue. Women should be taken more seriously when they do find something abnormal in their self breast exam. We know the base line and we know when someone isn't right. Especially if the area hurts. Even after my single mastectomy and finding another sore area.. I was told by my surgeon "that's your breast now, deal with it". Humans know when there is pain there is something wrong with their bodies. We should not be told by a doctor to just accept it. The whole system is frustrating. Thank you for these surveys

I was told that my breasts were dense by the technician who did my mammogram and I have had a yearly appointment, however my new doctor is following the 2 year guideline and skipping this year

Both Doctors and patients need to understand the risk of breast density. Mine was missed, with late diagnosis and then moved to lung after surgery/chemo / radiation. In second round of treatment now. Not sure if breast density was even on report. this all happened while living in NB
I have been screened yearly for the past five years due to having dense breasts.
Ultrasounds and MRI offered to those with dense breasts.

Needs to be done at age 40 across all provinces

Have always found this topic frustrating, especially since i have a friend who has done a lot of research due to her own recent experience & realize we have not made many gains in the way examinations are preformed

Since my own diagnosis I have been advocating for the notification to all woman of their breast density. However NL is very much in the back seat here. I have written the Premier on this topic & lodged a complaint with Eastern Health. The Minister of Health responded to explain that not all of the Mammogram machine in NL have the capability to measure density. I have been assured that the software to update these machines will happen this year. Meanwhile I can assure you that the Radiology Dept at Eastern Health will not commit to ensuring any education in this regard. They do not support the facts that women with dense breast have an increased risk... I find it very difficult to comprehend that there remains so much controversy world wide about breast screening. Every province is doing something different and even within provinces there are discrepancies..... let alone internationally! How can this be that there are not world wide accepted best practices in this area of medicine?

I was happy to have received an ultrasound along with my mammogram as I did learn I have very dense breast which can lead to false mammogram readings. However I had to ask for this. I wasn't aware to do so until I spoke to a friend who is a survivor. Women need to be educated on this. If the age would be lowered and depending on your density mammogram and ultrasound were accessible for people with dense breast I feel early detection would be more successful.

It should be egal all through Canada the same information and rights. All women should be able to get an mammogramme when they think it should be done, the information of risk, density, symptoms, etc. Should be given earlier in the twenies

More awareness direct to women that they are in control and can demand the care they want from physicians. Also physicians to provide stronger direction it is something women must do like a pap. I had a great doctor but also I am my own advocate for my health and don't simply accept what my doctor says. I am don't take no for an answer when it comes to prevention

I was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2018. I'd been having mammograms for about 14 years at that point, and had NEVER been told that I had dense breasts, and was therefore at increased risk of breast cancer. I was NEVER offered an ultrasound because of dense breasts either. I feel I should have been told & made aware of the increased risks to me, due to having dense breast tissue.

Breast clinics and their specialists should be able to make the decision when to start mammograms based on their patients risks like is done at WCH in Toronto.

I, like many in NB, no longer have a family doctor so how would I go about getting a mammogram?

In Hamilton Ontario I've had the Ontario Breast Screening Clinic refuse to give me one every year and tell me I have to wait 2 years. Even with my sister dying from Breast Cancer. I have dense breasts and a family history so why am I not able to get one every year? My other sister is getting the recommended 1 yr service. I also think a mammogram visit should also include ultrasound.

I am a 4 year breast Cancer survivor. I found my lump in the shower. 3 mammograms were unable to detect the lump. U/S saved the day only months after telling the doctor the lump was still there. He ordered ultrasound. My question: why are U/S not the standard for breast cancer detection alongside Mammograms.

I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT DENSE BREASTS MEANS

How does a woman know if she has dense breasts?

I have been happy with my physicians and when I had any worries was sent immediately for mammogram. If there is a family history, any age after 21 should be eligible- it can then be used as a baseline. Also, should someone feel strongly about having one, it should be considered.

Why does it have to wait until age 40 to start?!

If you have cyst/dense breast an ultrasound would help detect abnormalities

Make the age 40 across Canada

As I know many women under the age of 40 who were diagnosed with breast cancer I feel a baseline mammogram should be offered before 40 and any time a woman requests it. Once diagnosed all three of my family had successful treatments and are cancer free 12 and 15 years later. I would like all doctors, including radiologists to be aware of recommendations and risk factors so women are given consistent information. I manage my own health and do not trust relying on doctors to inform or remind me of my need for screening

Family docs do not seem to have info on density and are hesitant to repeat testing with family history. We need a standard chart showing protocols and next steps based on risk factors

I wish I had some good ideas to share with this survey but I'm not sure what needs to be done. More awareness in the general public I guess

Experience getting a mammogram has been good, organized

I think the stories of women who had no idea that they had dense breasts and then struggled with breast cancer should be promoted more. The stories are compelling, both of those women who died because it was too late when they found their cancer, or stories like mine, that were found totally by accident, and in enough time that successful treatment could take place. There is rarely a day that goes by that I don't think how lucky I am to have had an ultrasound about something else on my chest that then turned up a suspicious-looking lump in my breast. This was only a month after having had a mammogram that was supposedly clear. I often wonder if I hadn't had that ultrasound, would I still be alive today. It seems like luck was on my side, but it could have easily not have been. And it didn't have to be like that. If the medical profession knew that mammograms don't easily detect tumours in dense breasts, then why did I go all those years with only having mammograms? I'm sure the answer to that is complex, but it's also frightening to think about if you're a woman with dense breasts who only discovered she had cancer by accident.

I was very grateful to a female doctor at a women's health clinic for referring me for a mammogram for a baseline so that when I turn 50, there would be a comparison available. My family doctor doesn't do any women's health (pap/breast exams), so I make yearly separate appointments at the women's clinic. Thanks to this doctor, I have a baseline and have had a lump removed. It was a fibroadenoma, but I'm grateful that it's gone, regardless. I am appalled that there are doctors who can choose to not provide full care for women, but grateful that I went to the women's clinic as they were so thorough.

-more thorough education

More education around self check plus earlier screening.

My doctor did not want to send me first a mammogram. Said it was just dense tissue, a clog and would go away in a few months. I insisted.

Thank you for your work! Once I was over 50 and part of the Ontario Screening Program I was informed I had dense breasts. But I would have liked to know that earlier (in my 30s and 40s) when I was going for regular mammograms due to a cyst and family history of ovarian cancer.

I feel the ability to know your breast density is a big plus for being proactive with breast health. I have had only positive experiences with my primary health care provider and the mammography Dept at our hospital. My last mammogram (March) the tech decided because of my history with dense breasts and the fact that I had a previous breast mri that she would put me on the newest machine which would give a better image of my breast tissue.

Having had breast cancer, I find it extremely frustrating that I need a referral but someone who has not had breast cancer can book their own appointment through the breast screening program in Ontario.

Education for health care providers and their regulatory bodies. Education for women to know what they can feel empowered to ask/advocate for more themselves even when health professionals are not helpful.

I would like to see Breast Cancer Screening Clinics in every province whereby you can receive a mammogram and or an ultrasound and also be able to obtain immediate results and have a biopsy if necessary

Should not require a requisition from Dr.

I developed DCIS when I was 45 that was found through mammogram screening not the ultrasound that was also ordered. Women need to know both tests are needed for those with dense breasts or other risk factors (my paternal grandmother died from breast cancer after having both removed).

A second screening for breast cancer. I heard that even though having a lumpectomy, the cancer can tear its ugly head.

Great that they tell u your number A B C Or D

The reminders from the Ontario breast screening programme are much appreciated. Keep that going.

My health care provider is extremely pro-active and very open to patient input. I'm very fortunate and realize that is not the experience for all women.

Thank you to Dense Breasts Canada

The more info, the better. I have my next mammogram next month and I will definitely ask for my breast density.

Stay safe and healthy

I appreciate being reminded by Ont screening program to get mammograms. Also, I have a friend whose breast cancer was recently picked up by a routine mammogram.... asymptomatic but fairly advanced cancer that had just moved to the lymph nodes but not beyond..thankfully mammogram did pick it up, otherwise she would not have discovered the problem. Doing chemo now.

tESTS EARIER.....

Ontario OHIP does not provide mammogram coverage for women age 70+. I think this is highly problematic.

General awareness

Should be mandatory for all female family members of those already diagnosed

I believe that if your family doctor sends in a request for a mammogram, they shouldn't be able to deny that request because you're "too young" (I was 26). Also, making it the norm for doctors to have a conversation early about breast cancer and self screening

Just for your data, I'm a 5 year BC survivor. In 2016, I had to push for the women's clinic physician to send me for ANY imaging but I was 'too young for a mammogram'. I was subsequently diagnosed with breast cancer at age 33. I was always told that I had dense breasts during my annual pap + breast exam, but had no idea what that meant as far as risk. I was lucky to work at a hospital with nurses as coworkers who examined me and encouraged me to be assertive when I found my lump. Thanks for all you do!!

My 3rd mammogram detected my breast cancer. Very thankful for my screening, but it should be available at 40.

I feel that physicians should still be performing breast exams along with annual pap tests. Also, screening should be started at age 40 regardless of family history. Women should know about their breast density and the risks that go along with it. Perhaps we should be educating women as teenagers.

More details about dense breasts should be provided and explained to patients

Screening is every 2 years in NB - we get a letter to remind us - maybe info about dense breast could be included on the letter

My last mammogram found cancer that I couldn't feel and my surgeon couldn't feel. A few friends hearing my news booked long overdue screening appointments.

After a person has 'top' surgery (masculinizing chest surgery) is their risk of breast cancer the same? Screening should start Age 25, also with ultrasound as a tool.

I have a sister who had breast cancer. I have extremely dense breasts and feel further yearly screening is necessary for obvious reasons

We should have a yearly Canadian standard! Screening and surveillance are only helpful with regularity (yearly vs 3 years.)

Perhaps more education as it is not much.

My experience has been positive. My mom had breast cancer and my family doctor was great with providing information. My neighbour has been a great source of information and advocates for women being given their breast density information because of her own experience.

There has to be a better way than mammograms

breast screening needs to start at age 40, extra screening needed for women with dense breasts, current task force guidelines are ridiculous and need to be scrapped. Women are dying because of them.

As early as possible. No family history of breast cancer...but...ended up with a diagnosis of triple negative...stage 3c...almost 9 years ago...i am white (so triple negative is apparently not supposed to happen to me...but it did!!! Chemo, radical mastectomy, lymph node dissection and 28 radiation treatments saved my life. Im almost a 9 year survivor. Early detection is so very important with breast cancer!!!! It truly saves lives!!!!

start much younger than wait until over 50.

Young women should be made more aware of the risks of breast cancer - mammogram should be available to any woman young or old - this should not require a requisition.

I have heard mammogram cannot detect early signs of some breast cancer, and ultrasound is more accurate. All think all women over 25 should be educated on breast cancer and how to monitor themselves. I have been given no information from my GP because I am not 40 yet.

It once took 1 year for me to get a breast biopsy after having a suspicious mammogram. My Dr and I made several calls while I waited for an appointment for a stressful year. The Dr who finally saw me was surprised it took so long and offered a verbal apology. Worst experience ever!

Should be consistent screening regardless of your address. Breast Density matters.

Since I have dense breasts I should be able to get 3D mammogram or at least a diagnostic mammogram

Equal access across provinces including Indigenous communities. Everyone.

I was refused an ultrasound that my dr requested It would have found my cancer months earlier

I have dense breast tissue and have had breast cancer. However, I just had my first MRI post cancer treatment and have been unable to get ultrasounds yearly as needed under these circumstances. The mammogram results clearly state that not everything can be seen because of dense tissues but this is not enough according to those that make the decisions. Needs to be fixed!

I have (2) older sister who died from cancer, one from breast cancer and the other one from sinus cancer. I have another older sister who now is battling the stage 4 breast cancer. She knew there was something wrong with her breasts but she had no one to talk to about it until it caught up on her and she couldn't hide it from us anymore, but after the diagnosis it was already at stage 4. She is now in her 7th year battling cancer and involved in clinical trials. But the chemo therapy and medications are causing her to lose her appetite, hence no nutrients in her body to fight the stress. Online help must be readily available for all women, specially those without the means to ask for help. Thank you, I hope this helps.

Breast screening should be an option for women of any age, at any time they choose. Women of all ages are getting breast cancer, not just over 40's! If I had not advocated for earlier screenings (at 38), I would be dead now. My cancer was highly invasive but luckily caught early due to my own intuition. I had no symptoms! Early screening is so important!

In Ontario the population is very high so I strongly believe that government must put self registration portal for all eligible women. If not diagnosed at the correct stage breast cancer can be fatal and eventually it's a burden on our health care system.

I had to complain about my breast bothering me to get any screening. Doctor missed it every time and then I was stage 4 as soon as it was obvious

There was a period when I was told that I was too old to have a regular mammogram (told by the Breast Clinic) - but my own doctor has since provided requisitions as she says a woman is never too old to have breast cancer and therefore never too old to have a regular mammogram. However, I have not had a mammogram at the two year interval due to COVID-19.

Ultrasound mammograms for every dense breasted screenee.

Totally! More information is needed!

Notice if they for some reason stopped the program for you at 66 I waited over a year with very sore lumpy breast only now to have screening done at clinic instead of program I used every 2 yrs since my mid forties

Even though there is no history of breast cancer in my family I make sure my doctor schedules me every 2 years for screening. I first went at 45 when I felt a lump on self examination. It turned out to be a fibrous cyst but we wouldn't have found it & known what it was otherwise for another 5 years if I had waited

I was part of 10-year Princess Margaret diet impact on dense breast/cancer probably 20 years go. The most important factor in my view is making sure everyone can have a family doctor.

I shouldn't of been refused a referral to a mammogram at 49 when I constantly see patients younger than me coming for radiation treatments and many without risk factors. But I was told there was no reason to send me early and that Breast Health will send me info when I reach 50. We should be allowed to get a mammogram earlier without referral. Cancer diagnosis are being done at a younger age, we need to keep up with the times and lower the age for mammographies.

I definitely think women need to know that they can request breast screening after 40. I only learned that I had dense breasts just before I developed breast cancer last year.

The screening does not bother me at all or hurt I just can't believe the machine that is still used for this screening. You have to be an extortionist to fit your body in all those positions in order for the machine to get the proper image. This is crazy. There has to be a new machine provided with an easier way to see inside the breast. Please someone invent it for all of us women !!!

I think that every woman 40 years old and older should have once a year mammograms which are scheduled by an agency other than the family doctor

More communication in social media would be beneficial. We hear about breast cancer but not about what we can do to advocate for ourselves

I complete regular breast exams and my Dr has sent me for 1 mammogram due to a small lump found. Mammogram found nothing. I was told if no history in family they don't start regular mammograms until age 50.

I have lobular carcinoma and had to fight for additional screening! This is unacceptable. An ultrasound and/or MRI should be standard care for dense breasts. Only the MRI and finally US found it. But I had to fight for it! This is truly unacceptable.

I think doctors should promote self-screening and how-to tutorials beginning when a woman is 30 (or earlier), as well as guidelines on how often to screen.

I had a screening every 2 years and the breast cancer was not detected. It was reported by my cardiologist conducting heart scans. Apparently it had been there for 5-7 years!

Start mammograms earlier.

Ultra sound and biopsy should be done with gard lumps no matter what age the women is. If this had been Don for me my breast cancer would have been on situ not stage III/IV abd 17 cassettes on surgery.

I think every woman should know about breast screening early as in your 20's. Especially if you have a family history.

The guidelines should be changed to include optional ultrasound follow up included with C density breasts as cancers are being routinely missed with mammogram alone

my oncologist now makes sure I get a mammo each year followed up with an ultrasound as my mammos were missing things because of breast density my first was found at first screening, I discovered the second one myself a year later plus the recurrence 17 years after that

Base mris for high risk

I believe that women with dense breasts should automatically receive an ultrasound at the same time as mammogram to ensure nothing is missed.

That women with dense breasts get ultrasound as well as mammogram as women who have mammograms still get breast cancer as mammograms miss it. Or some kind of secondary test. I had only gone in for mammogram for a long time and my surgeon said she thinks the mammogram would have not picked it up. I know lots of people who had mammograms in regular basis and the mammogram has missed detecting the cancer ie 9 months later my friend found a lump and had cancer in her lymph nodes.

Not sure why there is a six month wait between screening mammogram and ultrasound once density has been determined

I would love to be able to book a mammogram hassle free

Wish the process could be different in the actual mammogram appointment (machine/standing/compression).

If a woman wants it, an appointment should be a click away.

Pre screening should be available and information shared to all women regardless of age

Improve the machinery

I have had many family members who have had cancer. Recently I have had an aunt on my dad's side pass away from breast cancer and an aunt on my mom's side just finished treatment. Since it is so common on both sides of my family I requested screening but was denied because of my age.

Perhaps use of ultrasound for those whose doctors see dense breasts.

I don't feel mammograms are reliable. There should be better tests available.

As a 48-year-old breast cancer survivor who has 2 teenage daughters (and I lost my grandma to breast cancer plus 4 aunts who had breast cancer), I would truly appreciate being able to book their own mammograms as needed instead of being at the mercy of any government age restrictions. Catching this early is so important!!!! Even though eradicating the cancer is not an enjoyable experience, it's far better than losing a loved one simply because it wasn't caught in a timely manner due to some committee's recommendations.

I find most doctors don't even do an exam of the breast during our exams. I've had one I think in 48 years.

Do not forget about these needs while we are coping through solving other complex illnesses

I was diagnosed at age 52 because I had screening early detection saved my life.

Have had two physicals in 50's and my doctor has never discussed mammograms. That should change and be part of a physical much like blood work

I had a lump and just finished breast feeding. Thought it was a blocked Milk duct. When I got to the mammogram they weren't going to do it because I hadn't been done breast feeding for 6 months. Well thank God they did decide after a discussion with the radiologist. Because if they didn't I would be not hear. I think there should be a yearly screening for women. And if younger women want one done, then it shouldn't be such a hassle.

1) If in the mammogram it shows you have dense breasts.. you should be automatically followed up with ultrasound. 2). After discovering I had a lump it took over five weeks for a mammogram. It should be one to two weeks max. 3). If you feel a lump, you should be referred to a breast clinic. I was referred to a local clinic and then had to be referred to the breast clinic which added a couple more weeks in as they had to redo the ultrasound to confirm I needed a biopsy. All in all it took over 3 months to get a diagnosis...too long

Routine screening should not be limited to mammogram alone. I was lucky to have had the discharges that made the doctor push for ultrasound and eventually, MRI, that showed my cancer and led to my mastectomy.

I was diagnosed at 42 with breast cancer. Had no previous screening and it was not part of my regular care for my age. It would be interesting to know if a mammogram at 40 would have detected my cancer 2 years prior.

I was offered a mammogram/ultrasound when I found a lump. My doctor never hesitated to refer me to specialists which I always appreciate. We discussed my breast density but I was told I didn't need to worry about any additional risk for breast cancer any more than another woman would.. My doctor helped me know what texture a potentially cancerous lump would feel like so I can keep a close eye for any new growths. I think that ongoing reminders and tips for women to perform regular self exam are helpful. If I hadn't get a lump, only pain, I would not have gone to see my doctor as I would have dismissed it.

Women should be able to book own appointments. Have dense breasts, so very interested.

I think older seniors should still be invited to have screenings.

Screening for younger woman are important. Cancer doesn't care about age

I heard that when you get a mammogram done you should protect your thyroid.they don't unless you ask.Is that true or not.I go every year so I am concerned about it

They always say catching cancer early is key. But many doctors look at your age and say you don't need one.

I attribute my sense of relative safety here to fortunate circumstances. I have a family doctor at a wonderful local health centre who is very good at having the right health conversations with me at the right time, so I feel very taken care of. My sense, however, is that this quality of stable continuous health care is a lucky thing for me to have in Canada today. I assume improving these overall structures for everyone will significantly help with all aspects of detecting and dealing with breast cancer in Canada.

Physicians need to let patients know if they have dense breast. I found out just by reading a recent radiology report that I requested to access...

As a breast cancer survivor, my cancer was diagnosed at Age 44 prior to breast screening program so some of the questions were not tailored for that option.

We should definitely have the ability to book our own at a local clinic.

I would prefer an ultra sound screening

Medical coverage for all women who have level D breast density to get alternative screening, such as ultrasound.

I have had one call back and needed a ultra sound after my mammogram, had to go every 6 months but last time, I was told come every year, my lump only shows on a mammogram.

The technology used is painful! More sensitive & education should be provided to those having their first exam. It is inhuman & embarrassing the way women are tested. The technology is cold, technician's are robotic with discard to ones feelings. This outdated practice should be revised.

I had a mammogram and a biopsy, determining a cyst. One year later it is bothersome and doctor dismisses my concern due to me having previous biopsy showing normal.

More integrated medical records as my friend who has had two episodes of breast cancer in 15 years, appears to need to ask for yearly mammograms as healthcare providers and screening programs don't seem to prioritize women with a history of breast cancer. Possibly have an opt-in to sharing personal medical info to get regular follow-ups.

Physicians no longer do breast exams

I am a nurse who was diagnosed with breast cancer at age 37. I am lucky since the doctor I saw sent me for an urgent mammogram when I found my lump. As a nurse though I have seen too many times doctors refusing to send women for screening or the req being refused as the women doesn't fit into the guidelines for screening.

I had a mammogram at 45 as my family doc felt irregularity in my breast. Nothing was found. 2 years later my next mammogram determined I had stage 4 metastatic breast cancer - spread to my liver. I had been told I had dense breast tissue but it was never recommended to me to have regular mammograms. This may have helped me and could help others in the future.

All my knowledge about breast screening has come with working with DBC. I would not have known nearly as much if I hadn't. I think it is important that everyone is more aware of the risks and that the screening system should also be improved so it serves women better.

Thank you for organizing this survey. I was unaware of the risks involving dense breasts UNTIL I had my first mammogram. My primary care physician did not inform me - it was the hospital technician who made a comment to me during the mammogram that informed me of the risks of breast density - and also informed me that a separate follow up would likely be needed because the equipment used for mammograms is not optimal for the best results on dense breasts.

I had a mammogram at 40 due to breast pain and fibrous tissue. It was negative but no information about density or anything else was provided. After any medical procedure patients should receive the same reports as their doctors sent to them by mail. Many times I've learned things years after the fact that we're in my reports. I learned I was diabetic for many years before finding out. Apparently it was in my blood work reports but was never told. Thank you for providing a platform to voice opinions.

Develop testing that does not require crushing women's breast tissue between plates of a machine. Make the annual physical exam mandatory again. We are not saving money by diagnosing people in later stages of illness or disease. It's absurd this even had to be asked. Every province and territory in Canada should have a policy of one annual check-up with a family physician/G.P. each year to seen for illness, conditions and diseases. Prevention costs so much less societally and economically than does treatment later on down the road.

I've had several mammograms. Some due to risk due to family member's diagnosis, one for symptoms and now two due to screenings after 50. The technicians are wonderful. Skilled, efficient and kind in what can be an uncomfortable and anxiety-provoking situation for many women. I agree with the lowering of the age for screenings. And ensuring that when someone has symptoms that they can be screened in a timely fashion.

I am relatively small-breasted and find mammograms quite uncomfortable, and tbh, I only get one when I think of it. I guess if it were more like a dental appointment where they rebook a follow-up, I would be more likely to keep on track.

Thank you for your efforts

Concerned about accumulating exposure to radiation

It seems that it is easy enough to get a mammo, but not an ultrasound. Women with dense breasts need to automatically be enrolled in all the screening they need and be informed early of their increased risk factors. Also, doctors have told me that there is an unnecessary delay in women getting mammos and getting their results by mail. Usually mammo etc are read by tech soon after done, but results sometimes take way too long. A doctor told me this.

self-referral program should be available in all provinces, regardless of age screening guidelines should begin at age 40

I had years of recalls after almost every mammogram. I should of had further investigations done. I wish I had started my mammograms at BC Woman's hospital & not my local hospital in Richmond. They are more willing to investigate further. We should be able to have 3D mammograms as well.

The screening poster of image examples only show breasts from the front. My cancer would have been noticed from a side angle as it was under my breast (my breast didn't lie flat against my skin). My point is that women should look at all angles and examples could be shown of what to look for. Also, pain was a symptom and that seems to be discounted. I had pain in my breast when I was on my tummy on a massage table.

They should start screening at age 40

I have been dismissed as not requiring screening several times despite my family history. After finding lumps on several occasions I had to fight to get a mammogram or ultrasound. Eventually I decided to pay for private clinic access (Medcan) because I didn't feel my family doctor was doing enough and I was extremely tired of the fight.

I would like to be able to make my own yearly mammogram appointment rather than have to wait for my MD to decide to

Women should not have to self advocate. Doctors should be willing to issue a requisition without needing a women to justify their own healthcare. Ontario is behind in women's health care

I feel that mammograms should now be offered at 30

I feel that every woman should be told of breast density on first mammogram and given literature on why it's important.

I would prefer to get screened and consult with doctors at a breast screening clinic. A male GP who reads results from an imaging clinic where I had to go back for ultrasound and I still don't fully understand what they saw as all was by phone. So self registering at a breast screening clinic where I manage that part of my health would be better.

Early detection & screening is very important. My sister (61 years old) was recently diagnosed with breast cancer as a result of a screening mammogram.

woman with a Density D should have follow up Ultra sounds no matter what on a yearly basis...too many woman have mammograms then 6 months later have cancer!!!! It should be mandatory and Radiologist cannot refuse when a Doctor orders a follow up ultra sound...very frustrating as we have several in our clinic with Density D and have tried to book Ultra sounds but they refuse it...

What indicator am I looking for on scan?

Reports should give more info. I.e. which category one falls into. Also family doctors need more education If mammograms are not an ideal screening tool for women with dense breasts, and considering how common breast cancer is, why isn't a more accurate screening method being used?

I think the concept that "you are too young" is the biggest issue at hand. I was 45 when diagnosed. Had complained of issues for months and was ignored. Diagnosed at stage 4. Was recently sent paperwork by the province to get my screening - 5 years after being diagnosed. I called and spoke to a representative and offered some opinions including that screening should be younger and was told point blank that the priority is for older women. Which is ridiculous because the younger you are the more likely you will end up stage 4. Women of any age should be able to call a clinic and request a mammogram and it should be covered.

I think breast screening should start slightly earlier around 35 yrs.

I am part of the Ontario Breast cancer Screening initiative and have been for several years. Education is the key to promote greater awareness of dense breasts/cancer risk - use of social media is helpful as are printed material in family MD offices.

More advertising.....and improve the machines so they don't cause as much pain! That's enough to put women off from having tests regularly.

Less waiting time! I had to wait 2 months for my first mammogram and I was sent because I had a lump in my breast.

We need to speak more openly about women's bodies. We need to get information out to university/college students so that they can learn more about their bodies and be more aware of any changes happening to them.

Why not screen using mammo and ultra sound for women with dense breasts.

I always feel the screening is painful. I don't wish there was a less painful screening. I feel healthcare providers should discuss the screening results even if no cancer is found. I have small cysts so I would appreciate confirmation they haven't grown etc

Please make women aware

100% need to remove the paternalistic influence of the current screening guidelines. Women can make an informed choices.

I was diagnosed with breast cancer as result of my second mammogram at 44.

Need mammogram once a year

As I said previously, I shouldn't have to get a requisition annually when I've been told to have one every year! Also, I had/have to be my own advocate to ensure I have the best care available. My first mammogram was when I was in my 30's, I was told I'm going for an ultrasound immediately as there was something found on the mammogram. Subsequently I ended up going to the hospital a few weeks later for a biopsy! After that I was going every 6 months for a few years for a mammogram. Then in 2012, I was 49, I had my annual mammogram and was called to my NP's office on a Saturday morning, I had to go for a biopsy. She sent a requisition to the hospital and I waited and worried for a few weeks, I finally called and was told I was scheduled in like a month just for another mammogram so they could determine if I need a needle aspirate biopsy or a Stereotactic biopsy. I did some research between being told and this point, I ended up asked my NP to send a requisition to Princess Margaret, The Gatuso clinic. I got an appointment within two weeks and through this clinic, I had a stereotactic biopsy and saw the Oncologist the following day to be told it wasn't cancer just the same thing as I always had! It shouldn't be this difficult for women to get the care they need in Canada!! I was diagnosed with depression and anxiety shortly after this and as a chronic migraine sufferer I ended up off work for 3 years and was forced back by my disability insurance company. I worked at a different company for two years and ended up going on CpP disability! Sorry to give my life story but I'm thinking I've got dense breasts and I'm concerned! Quite often I'm taken for an ultrasound after my mammogram because they're not quite sure if there's something on the mammogram! After reading up on Dense Breasts, I'm going to insist on an ultrasound until I'm told if I have dense breasts or not!! Thanks for reading my rant!

I think the machine and how breasts are squeezed, which can be uncomfortable, for screening is an archaic method. If men were having their penis screened similarly, well women know there would be a better, less painful method that's for sure. Women I know with breast implants are reluctant to have mammograms because of pain and fear the implants will be damaged. Are there better, non-invasive methods for breast cancer screening? Is there better forms of imaging? If there is, why are we not looking at that? Thank you, Sandy Parks NP (Midland, Ontario)

I was diagnosed stage 3B at 42.. a screening mammogram at 40 would have saved me being so advanced

We should of continue with the nurse checking breasts at the time you had mammo

I wonder about ultrasounds instead of mammogram. I had one after having a breast cyst during mammogram. Felt much more comfortable and I think I have dense breasts so felt (maybe wrongly?) it was a good backup

Screening for breast cancer should begin at 40 all across Canada. And repeated as per the same schedule of every 2 years

Yes I have dense breasts but it was not educated to me until I had cancer, ended up with a double mastectomy left breast cancer but did both because of the density. Mine wasn't fully clear with mammograms because so dense needed an mri

I believe that breast screening should be done earlier than age 40 especially with a family history of breast cancer. Annual mammograms would definitely help reduce late stage detection of breast cancer.

That All Patients be listened to, heard & if requesting further testing from your healthcare professional that it be granted without question or "let's just keep an eye on it, make another appointment in..., weeks, months..., etc. Whatever results are revealed from the testing should be discussed fully with the patient. Not..., your results came back negative or positive or we will redo the test again in 6 months time. What do the results say? What do the abbreviations mean? what do they mean to me? We know our bodies & we would not be there for our 10 minute appt if there wasn't something we are concerned about. We know our bodies, what we are experiencing 24/7 & need to be taken seriously when we speak with our healthcare provider when we are asking for these assistance when we have a concern. Therefore, being able to schedule a mammogram when you find a lump(s) you may be concerned about would be of great benefit mentally & emotionally especially cutting down on wait times, referrals, worry. We deserve to know, it's our bodies, it's our lives. I thank you for giving me this opportunity to provide my thoughts on behalf of myself & survivors I have met along the way over these past few years that has personally affected them & if this can help just one person it would make my heart full. Thank you! Take Care, Be Safe & Be Well

I think that the topic of dense breasts should be discussed with all women, and better diagnostic testing (MRI) should be done if a woman has dense breasts.

Annual mammograms

I'm 33 and had no idea how difficult it was to get a mammogram. I think any woman regardless of age should have the opportunity to get one if she or her health care provider think it is necessary. It's a noninvasive procedure that could potentially save lives.

I'm my case with breast cancer, oncologists keep telling me I do t have hereditary risks even though both my sister and mother have stage 3 at a young age. Extremely annoying to be downplayed.

I should have been told about density years before cancer diagnosis.

Screening should be accommodated for anyone, any age- without health care teams saying "oh you're too young,!

MRI should be standard of care. None of my three tumours ever appeared on ultrasound nor mammogram Scary that the age in Manitoba is 50. I was diagnosed at 38. More & more woman I know are younger & younger

Breast Ultrasound should be more widely available. I feel Breast ultrasound should be offered to all women with dense breasts at the time of their mammogram and even twice a year for very dense breasts.

I had ABUS done but had to pay out of pocket. This made me angry because it should be covered as I was told I have very dense breasts

Yearly screening should be available to all, and up to date equipment should be on site to facilitate this very important test.

Regular discussions with GP about breast health, checks.

I was horribly upset that even though I had cancer (successfully treated) in my left breast, my right breast was rarely looked at and never given an ultrasound. I was told that I had to have something visible on a mammogram in order to get an ultrasound on the right side. But I now knew I had dense breasts and I also knew that my cancer had not shown up on any mammogram. The lump was quite easily felt as it was sitting on my breast bone. The lack of interest in just thoroughly checking my non-cancerous side caused me anxiety for quite a few years. I feel breast screening would be much better if ultrasounds were given to those who have dense breasts on a regular basis just like a mammogram.

Early education from healthcare professionals for women under the age of 40

Breast ultrasounds for all women who want them - I am routinely denied an ultrasound despite very dense breasts

I will be requesting ultrasound screening going forward as the ultrasound found the 2nd lump that they biopsied that the mammogram did not

My breast cancer was found in a routine mammogram. I always had a regular mammogram at the doctor's insistence. Should be thankful that I had a doctor who made sure that I did. 9 years later i still have an annual mammogram, at 80.

There should be an earlier screening program for sure, i have met many in 20's up diagnosed this year. Some were not caught early enough because they didn't know what to check for or feel a lump or thought it was normal after children to get changes to their breasts

Something extra should be offered to women with dense breast. I am only finding out about my dense breast now that I was diagnosed with cancer 8 months after a supposedly "clear" mammogram. This is rather unfortunate. If I was offered an ultrasound on top of a mammogram, then perhaps, my cancer would have been identified 8 months earlier?

I think that every province should be screening from age 40

My daughter was diagnosed at 26 after a dr refused to even do a physical breast exam even though the family risk was high. She fought for 6 yrs. We lost her at 31 my heart is broke

When undergoing procedure of mammogram ex rays, technician need to be more gentle.

I have dense breast tissue and I have had breast cancer. It was found early stage and responded well to treatment. I firmly believe every woman should be screened early and have ultrasound as well if they have dense breast tissue. My mammograms were misread for three years before someone picked up the abnormality that turned out to be cancer. I was very lucky it was treatable. Dr Jean Seeley in Ottawa is one of my radiologists and I fully support her calls for women to be screened early, regularly and with ultrasound or MRI if they have dense breasts. My MRI is tomorrow. Fingers crossed it is clear!

Screening should be done every year and not every 2 years

I think when you have your first mammogram, and you have dense breasts, a baseline ultrasound should be next. I had symptoms that my mammogram did not detect, then I had a MRI then a MRI biopsy
Educational videos or articles on how to self check, nutrition that is important etc. My family doc has a website that i need to log into to check test results. Would be great to have some informational videos on self check in this account.

It should be available to everyone regardless of age

I think there needs to be more information made available to women.

I would like the option of ultrasound rather than mammogram.

Once a year rather than biannually. Every technician I have ever encountered has always been pleasant, gentle and reassuring... they are gems.

If it wasn't for regular mammograms my breast cancer would have never been detected as no viable lumps of symptoms, mammogram saved my life and got me diagnosed early

I believe that every woman should have a baseline mammo at age 40. It should be easier for women with dense breasts to have access to MRIs. My ILC likely would have been detected years earlier if I had been able to get an MRI. Women need to be made aware that breast cancer doesn't always show up as a lump.

I was diagnosed at 38 years old the first time. 48 years old the second time. I was very fit and healthy the first time I was diagnosed, non drinker and non smoker... every woman should get screening at whatever age she wants

See previous comments

I feel risk factors are overemphasized considering how many people can get it with no risk factors. Also the discomfort during a mammogram I felt was relatively minimal and the person doing it was so professional - I'd much rather have a mammogram than most other medical or dental procedures.

Ontario eliminated the breast physical examination done by a trained nurse at the same appointment as having a mammogram. I am not happy about this at all!

Make GPs aware of breast density as a risk factor. My doctor doesn't believe that breast density is a risk factor. This makes getting ultrasound referrals after mammogram impossible - when they are necessary with a D density.

Radiologist that read mammogram need to be aware of dense breasts and do follow up tests for women with dense breasts!

I was diagnosed this January. I found the lump prior to my regular 2 year mammogram due to some pain. I think we need to educate women about the importance of breast self exams as well. Should women with dense breasts also have MRIs or ultrasounds as a part of their screening, too?

I had my first mammogram at 40 & was told I have dense tissue and should always have a mammogram & ultrasound. This year at 44 when I went for a mammogram they would not book an ultrasound at the same time as my tissue is not dense enough. It is a level C. I was diagnosed with breast cancer in February of this year. Waiting for an ultrasound could have caused the cancer to spread as I have an aggressive form. We should not have to wait.

Completely clueless on the topic aged mid forties - there's probably a lot to improve raising awareness, access etc.

Increased information and ease of access to the information from a reputable or accredited agency. Eg links to DBC from various hospital web sites that informs women on the process, links to self examination, benefits and risks of mammogram alone vs U/S + mammogram, if available links to local agencies to book mammograms where provincially possible

I received a mammogram in August 2019 and was told it was likely a cyst. After 4 months it grew and was positive in my lymph nodes. I wish they would have required further testing at the time to possibly prevent the cancer from growing and spreading

I think any woman with dense breasts or 'lumpy/cystic' breasts like mine should be automatically sent yearly after age 30. I had no idea I was at a higher risk. My family dr said they were lumpy but that mammograms aren't really needed until after 50. I also had no clue that it didn't matter I had no family history. I only found my lump because I had a horrible ache in my armpit, then found a hard pea sized lump that was sitting on top of what I thought was one of my normal cysts. Turned out that normal cyst that'd been there for quite some time was not so normal, but at least was slow growing. The pea sized lump however was very aggressive. So annual screening may have caught the slow growing lump very early and a lumpectomy may have sufficed. But I ended up needing a mastectomy because the whole involved area was too large even tho I was a stage 1. :(

Oncologist told me my stage 2 cancer had probably been there for years. would earlier screening age found it before it grew larger.

I think that every province and every woman in that province should have access to mammography especially if they have known family history have cancer and or have an unknown family history on either biological parent side.

Women offered mammogram and ultrasound together if they have dense breasts.

Health care always had my back

I had to advocate for myself to get early breast screening due to my family history. I have had to deal with people all my life asking why I was so young when I started my first mammogram. My mother died at the age of 40, (I was 18), from breast cancer. This is why we need earlier breast screening.

More information on breast ultrasounds and their benefits.

I'm actually pretty impressed with Ontario's (at least Toronto's) approach. My family doctor is amazing and I'm in the Ontario Breast Cancer Study (not sure if that's the right name) who bug me every year to get my mammogram done. Try teaming up with a Canadian bra manufacturer (think La Senza) and see if they will include info with bra purchase and on their website.

I am a breast cancer survivor and was not aware of the risks associated with dense breast tissue until I recently began following Dense Breasts Canada. Besides my age of 55 at diagnosis, dense breast tissue was my only other risk factor. I know that now in retrospect. Education of women is of the utmost importance for early detection.

I think there should be a media campaign stressing the benefit of having screening done. I think a lot of people think that breast cancer can be cured with the current treatment options. I don't think the average person truly understands what can happen if a woman is diagnosed at a later stage.

I wish I had known about breast density sooner. NS does not offer women breast ultrasounds. Even after being diagnosed with breast cancer and knowing that I have level C dense breast tissue, I had to go to Ontario for an Ultrasound, at my own expense.

I believe if they see changes in a breast. Tell you its dense they should look further into and do a biopsy to insure no cancer there.

I was told that in sk you are only told of your breast density if it is 75% dense. Does that mean there are no issues with reading mammograms with 74% density? If so then the system works. If not, do what's right

I agree women should be able to book their mammograms. But I likely wouldn't have thought to do it if it weren't for my GP's guidance initially. Since then I rely on the reminders from the breast clinic to book each time.

Women need to be advised of their breast density and the potential ramifications of this.

Ontario needs to mandate radiologists to put the breast density on their report and physicians need to be mandated to discuss this with their patients, and those with dense breast tissues need to have an ultrasound included in their screening

Self check is very important

Mammograms are not as useful as an Ultrasound. I will be having one breast removed and I will never have another Mammogram done nor would I recommend as it never found my Cancer. I will only have an Ultrasound done from now on. I have totally lost faith in getting Mammograms done. It never picked up my Cancer and my Cancer is Metastatic Aggressive Ductal Cancer. I'm not very impressed after just having a Mammogram showing nothing and then an Ultrasound days apart showing Cancer.

I wish I had been more aware of the increased risk of developing BC in dense breasts, and I was not aware of how difficult it is to see a cancer on a screening mammogram of dense breast tissue. As the technician who pointed out my lump to me on my screening mammogram when I went for follow-up screening, "it's like finding a snowball in a snowstorm". And that is pretty much what my mammogram looked like. I am amazed they saw the small body. I never felt it doing my own breast exams.

Dense breasts just noted on post-mammogram letter, never discussed nor suggested alternative form of screening.

I think it should be standard procedure for a woman with dense breast to always have an ultrasound with her annual mammogram.

PEI does not include breast density on diagnostic mammogram reports and I have been given no information about breast density. All women need to know. I was told only 2 of 4 radiologists include it on diagnostic reports. My healthcare provider and my nurse practitioner at PEI Cancer Treatment Centre were not willing to discuss it and dismissed it being a factor or concern. It is rare to get additional screening on PEI. So much for early diagnosis or of a recurrence. Healthcare providers seem uninformed of breast density risks and the affect of late diagnosis for patients. More concerned about additional testing causing unnecessary stress and saving screening costs.

I was told I have dense tissue on the my left breast when I went for my breast screening ...yet they continued to do mamograms rather than ultrasounds...2 yrs ago I was diagnosed with stage 4 de novo All women should have routine breast screening, they should be made aware of their breast density and if a woman has dense breast tissue, they should be scheduled for an ultrasound. Early detection and being proactive is extremely important.

if requested mammograms should be available after age 77

Despite have dense breasts my breast cancer was detected by a Mammogram, with not physician able to feel the lump.

Breast screening should be every year

there used to be a push on self exams - is this still helpful? i dont hear about it at all anymore

I recently felt lumps in my breast that ended up being benign (due to changes in hormones from peri menopause) and was put through a lot of stress not knowing this is a common thing. Better education about menopause for women my age (53) would be beneficial for our mental health and well-being. cannot get a ultrasound screening in newfoundland unless you find lump...then its to late..

There is a deplorable lack of 3D ultrasound in Ontario. We must travel to Toronto for this test. Also, radiologists are UNWILLING to discuss issues with breasts. It's test after test with no answers. And breast density was NEVER discussed with me. Ontario Breast Screening is appalling.

Very professional

I am not sure of the role of self-exam. this doesn't seem to be stressed as often. my MD no longer does annual physical check-ups so its up to me!

I feel women should know what breast density is and what there is after each Mamogram

The stress of screening and waiting for a result is real and frightening. However the alternative (not getting screened to avoid that unpleasantness) greatly overshadows this truth. My Dr saved my life because without her guidance and knowledge I would not have had the screening until I was symptomatic.

I come from Brazil, a place that is way far from perfection, but self exams are taught more openly than I have seen in Canada. Same thing for how lesions may feel and look like on the outside of the breasts. There, they recommend yearly screening mammograms for patients. It may be that it depends on the specialist. Women usually have a gynecologist they see periodically. Mine recommended the yearly screening mammograms, which she had followed up by ultrasound. I had the same while living in the USA. When I moved to Canada, my family physician told me that those were not the practices in the country, saying that too many mammograms could even cause cancer. He ignored that breast tissue density could be a factor increasing the risk of cancer and of misdiagnosis. I think that it is important to educate family doctors about the need for baseline mammograms at earlier ages and what is recommended for the specific patient. I find the argument of anxiety, over-diagnosis and over-treatment to discourage patients from screenings highly offensive, paternalistic and patronizing. I was diagnosed stage IV de novo and even then my then family physician downplayed my symptoms and recommended that I went to do yoga. Every woman should be advised about breast density and it's associated risks. Also women should not be discouraged from self examination.

Every woman should be screened carefully if being diagnosed with dense breasts. My cancer could have been caught earlier.

Just as ads have increased re: colorectal cancer among young folks, and are encouraging screening earlier than 50 (colonoscopy) , perhaps more ads should be available to increase awareness of the subject. Media is a powerful tool.

I have to beg for a breast ultrasound every time I go for a mammogram even though I have dense Breasts. That's so unfair

I recently asked my GP for a requisition for a mammogram, one year after my last one. She was good with giving that to me even though I am meant to have one every two years. However, when I went into the lab, the reception there was unwelcome. I was asked why I was there "early". After getting the results of that latest mammogram, I am told I will be getting one every year now. I asked again for my density, but was told I was considered "normal". No other information was provided as I don't think my GP's office is aware of the possible implications of having dense breasts, etc.

I asked at 40yo for a mammogram and was told I didn't need one if I didn't have symptoms and that Ontario didn't do them until 50. I am now 44yo and have just been diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer after finding a lump 9months ago. If I had access to one earlier, the cancer may have been found sooner!

At my doctor's office a few years ago, I was told that the guidelines in Canada no longer recommend that women do self-screening at home. Manual breast screening was also no longer offered as an automatic part of a physical or pap appointment unless you requested. This seems really odd to me. How is one supposed to detect anything if no one is being told to do any screening?

I really believe that early detection is critical. All women over the age of 20 should be able to get the necessary screening for breast cancer. A mammogram is not always going to pick up cancer so we should be looking at other screening tools. Also more emphasis on risk factors should be discussed. I thought family history was the only risk factor but there are so many... age of giving birth, age of first period, carrying pregnancy to term, alcohol, birth control the list goes on. I had no idea until I was being asked after my diagnosis.

Breast Cancer Screening should be recommended. My Breast Cancer diagnoses changed my life and I have gone through surgery's and still have more to go through. It has been extremely stressful mentally, physically and emotionally on me. I would like to see women get screening earlier and for them to be educated on it as part of our health care system. Losing your breast/s should not happen this day and age.

A key piece of information that is also missing is that lobular breast cancer typically doesn't show up in regular screening even for people without dense breasts since it doesn't present in the same way that ductal does. This messaging is also missing. Something else from my own experience with screening (which only happened after I had breast cancer symptoms) was that because I had both dense breasts and lobular breast cancer, nothing showed up on the mammogram. The tech commented that I had dense breasts but didn't tell me what that could mean and when they couldn't find anything, told me so in a way that made me feel like they didn't believe me when I knew something was wrong. Thank God my doctor had also ordered an ultrasound, although that also didn't pick up anything except the impacted lymph nodes when, in fact, I had lobular breast cancer in both breasts (and, turns out, throughout my axial skeleton as well). Not only does there need to be better screening for people with dense breasts, the people that give the mammograms and ultrasounds need to be better trained.

I think the age for breast screening should be lowered to 30 or 35. I had never had a mammogram until I was 39 and I only had one then because I found a lump. I am now 41 with stage 4 breast cancer. Early access to screening and detection are key. I didn't have a chance to have early screening because I wasn't old enough.

There should be more information/proactive communication from family doctors around screening. I've felt that I can't ask to be screened because of my age and that I don't have a family history.

The breast screening program in NS was A-1; mobile clinic to various communities; in PEI there are still women who do not realize they can self refer for screening; it is good that the province ensures the %age of dense breast tissue is noted in the report but am hopeful it also is a conversation with the GP; if 75% or higher would be wise to have an ultrasound as follow up; in my own instance that is how the dx was made both times (2002 and 2012) was via ultrasound. So PEI could improve stats for women being dx if follow up included the issue of tissue density and an ultrasound I'm sure.

Our healthcare system needs to be revamped

I have been involved with the OBSP and thought they provided a good screening service. They could provide more education.

I believe that Health Canada should still actively promote self-screenings. This is how I found my cancer and I know of many other women who also found the lumps themselves.

Thank you for all the hard work you are doing.

Stop stalling and start screening. Cancer is scary, but just get on with screening

The current guidelines for breast cancer screening put women at risk of not having breast cancer diagnosed early. Needs to be an update and this should include breast cancer specialists making decisions.

I had no idea I could request a mammogram after 40 and was never offered one. I found a lump at 49. I was told it was probably there for two years. It could have been found sooner. I had no delays getting the treatment I needed after finding the lump.

I'm glad I read about density as no one else seems to think it's important or relevant

Keep campaigning for everyone to be screened at any age. I would love to be more involved with awareness and help others. Being an advocate is very important to me. I just wish I knew more about prevention earlier. But cancer has taught me so much.

Should have posters and pamphlets on it in waiting rooms and examination rooms. Should be added to high school text books.

Women with dense breasts absolutely need to know that they need to be vigilant with self exam

There needs to be more awareness for the younger generation. More known statistics and research. Doctors are quick to dismiss younger woman and their concerns when it comes to their breast. We need more information, more awareness, unless someone in a family is affected by breast cancer younger woman don't put much thought in knowing their breast or concerned. They are focused on the mammogram being done later in life and so many are not aware of their risk when younger.

Breast screening should be started at age 40 whatever province you live in. All women in every province should be informed of their breast density. All women with dense breasts should be referred for additional screening. My stage 3 invasive lobular carcinoma was missed on several screening mammograms due to having dense breast tissue. Lobular breast cancer is more difficult to detect using mammography alone due to it's unique cellular structure. Due to late detection my cancer had already spread to the majority of my lymph nodes that were removed. The breast screening system failed me and continues to fail women with dense breasts and with invasive lobular breast cancer.

Women should be able to self-refer for a mammogram once a year, as of age 40. Information about breast density and the implications should be included in mammogram results letter mailed to patients.

Canada's screening guidelines have to be brought up to date. Perhaps they need to be reminded that the life they save could be a loved one.