

WOMEN'S HEALTH ADVISOR PROJECT

April 1998

Over 1200 Women Participate

Duke University Medical Center and Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of North Carolina have been working together on the Women's Health Advisor Project for the



past 4 years. Over 1200 women ages 50 and older who are current and past members of Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of North

Carolina participated. The project was designed to help increase the use of regular screening mammograms in women ages 50 and older by distributing information by mail, telephone or through the provider. This newsletter includes some of the results from the project and gives you some important information about breast cancer.

What's Recommended?

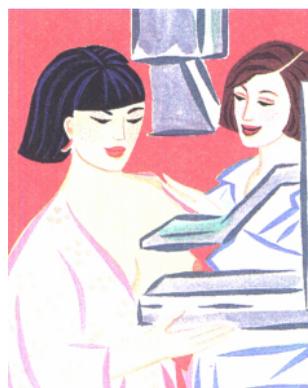
Experts agree that women ages 50 and older should have mammograms every year. The National Cancer Institute and the American Cancer Society agree with these screening guidelines, and so do most doctors and health care organizations, including Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of North Carolina.

Important Facts About Breast Cancer and Mammography

Breast cancer is the most common form of cancer among American women. In 1997, an estimated 180,000 women found that they had breast cancer.

The purpose of a mammogram is to find breast cancer early. Mammograms cannot prevent breast cancer. Through early detection, mammograms can reduce the chances of dying from breast cancer.

In addition to yearly mammograms, yearly breast exams by a health professional are also a central part of breast cancer screening. All women ages 50 and older need yearly breast exams performed by a health professional.



Who's Had a Mammogram?

In the final year of our project, over 98% of women reported ever having a mammogram, and almost 92% had one in the past year. It's great that most of you are having your mammograms on schedule. We hope you continue having them every year.

Age Makes a Difference!

We asked women participating in the project which of the following age groups has the highest risk of breast cancer. Here are the results:

Women 50 and over.....	40%
Women under 50.....	6%
Age makes no difference.....	51%
Don't know.....	3%

More than half of the women thought that age made no difference. The fact is, being a woman and getting older are the most important risk factors for breast cancer. Women ages 50 and older have the highest risk of getting breast cancer. Three-fourths of the breast cancer cases occur in women ages 50 and older. **Age makes a difference!**

What Are the Chances of a Woman Getting Breast Cancer as She Ages?

By age 50	1 out of 50
By age 60	1 out of 24
By age 70	1 out of 14
By age 80	1 out of 10



Source: NCI Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results (SEER) Program & American Cancer Society. 1993

Looking Into Other Sources For Information



Below you will find other breast cancer and mammography resources. We cannot guarantee the accuracy of information from any source except the National Cancer Institute.

Cancer Information Service (CIS) of the National Cancer Institute

 (800) 4-CANCER

CIS is a nationwide program for health professionals, patients, and the general public. Trained CIS information specialists are available Monday through Friday, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. to answer questions and provide materials about cancer, in both English and Spanish.

CancerNet of the National Cancer Institute (NCI)

 <http://cancernet.nci.nih.gov/>

Internet users can use CancerNet to quickly and easily access current cancer information from the NCI's computer database.

American Cancer Society (ACS)

 (800) ACS-2345

ACS is a nationwide, voluntary organization that provides programs and materials about cancer and shares information about local services and activities.

 <http://www.cancer.org/>

The Women's Health Advisor Project would like to thank Kaiser Foundation Health Plan of North Carolina for their collaboration with this important project. The Women's Health Advisor Project is funded by a grant from the National Institutes of Health, National Cancer Institute (grant R01CA63782).