Uptake of breast cancer screening in women aged over 75 years: a controversy to come?

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Abstract

In France, the age range for organized screening for breast cancer is 50-74 years. From a layperson's perspective, the public health message focusing on a specific target population may be difficult to understand. The aim of this study is to assess how women aged over 75 years deal with this absence of screening recommendations for their age group. The population-based survey, EDIFICE, was carried out by telephone in 2008. Women were interviewed with regard to their behaviour, and in particular relating to breast cancer screening. For 136 breast cancer-free women, aged 75 and above and who had undergone at least one mammography in their lifetime, the test had been done within the last 2 years for only 62 (51%) of them. In a multiregression analysis, only one item (i.e. already having undergone at least five mammographies) was statistically associated with a higher rate of attendance (odds ratio=3.3, 95% confidence interval=1.03-11.1). According to our data, for women aged 75 and above, an estimated 17,000,000 Euros are spent each year on breast cancer screening in France, the net benefit of which is still unknown.

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