

SBI San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium Statement

Today, at the San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium Robert Smith, PhD from the American Cancer Society discussed the results of the re-examination of data from four large international mammography screening studies. The re-examination showed that the estimates of the number of patients needed to be screened to save one life from breast cancer were overestimated. Dr. Smith and his colleagues found that the estimates from the four studies were all based on inconsistent study methods such as different age groups being screened, different screening intervals and different follow-up periods. When all the estimates were standardized, the number of patients needed to be screened to save one life was far less than reported in the studies.

The Society of Breast Imaging (SBI) is pleased to see the results of the re-examination of these four studies. This is good news for women. Major scientific studies have clearly shown that screening beginning at the age of 40 saves lives. This latest study goes one step further showing that screening is more efficient in saving lives than some have suggested.

It is critical to remember that therapy is most likely to save lives when breast cancers are detected and then treated early.

A recent example of mammography's benefits was when ABC anchor Amy Robach discovered via an on-air mammogram that she had breast cancer. Although it was a nontraditional way to go about getting her mammogram, like many other women, for Amy it turned out to be a critically important decision. SBI, along with the American Cancer Society and many other organizations, recommend women begin regular annual mammography screening at the age of 40. Until there is

a universal cure, or a safe way to prevent breast cancer, thousands of lives can be saved through mammography.

Details about this study are available in the November 2013 issue of [*Breast Cancer Management*](#). For more information about the symposium, visit www.sabcs.org.