

In an effort to reduce or eliminate access to mammography screening, opponents continue to focus on just the negative aspects of screening. In their recent paper, Brodersen and Siersma surveyed 230/10,000 (2%) women who had an abnormal mammogram in a group of 10,000 women, and another group of 360 women recalled from screening out of 20,000 (2%). Somehow the authors overlooked the fact that in both groups 98% of the women likely had some anxiety reduction because their screening test was negative. Although there were a number of other confounding issues that the authors failed to address, why did they not study the positive psychological effects of screening as well? Risks and benefits need to be understood. It would appear that the authors were not interested in benefits and were only interested in finding the very small number of women who had some persistent anxiety.

References:

Brodersen J, Siersma VD. Long-Term Psychosocial Consequences of False-Positive Screening Mammography. *The Annals of Fam Med* March/April 2013 vol. 11 no. 2 106

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