

# BAYSHORE COMMUNITY HOSPITAL

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Dear Doctor,

It is unfortunate that the U.S. Preventive Services Task force has recently come out with new recommendations for screening mammography that are in conflict with the recommendations from established leading organizations. The American Cancer Society, the Society of Breast Imaging, the American College of Radiology, the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology, and the American Society of Breast Disease all are unchanged in their recommendations for screening mammography. The confusion that this has caused has come at a time when many people already face a great deal of anxiety about the future of their health care.

Part of the problem is that the Task Force used only some studies for their analyses and ignored other, better trials that clearly demonstrate the benefit of screening mammograms in reducing mortality, throughout the age spectrum, specifically the Swedish trials. The Task Force also ignored the consequences for delaying a cancer diagnosis and looked only at mortality rates. The significant differences in morbidity, personal grief, and financial costs between early and late stage cancer were not addressed.

One of their main arguments was that screening mammography has inherent "harms" that outweigh its benefits in certain instances. Again, the Task Force ignored literature describing survey results that show that women will accept false positives if additional cancers are found on screening. I would refer you to this webpage which has links to official statements from the main organizations <http://www.sbi-online.org/displaycommon.cfm?an=16> and I would specifically refer you to the response from Dr. Daniel Kopans, who is a respected leader in this discussion <http://www.sbi-online.org/associations/8199/files/Commentary%20Daniel%20Kopans.pdf>.

Ultimately, it is the decision of each individual woman to decide to obtain a screening mammogram. The recommendations of the Task Force confuse a complicated issue, making it harder for the layperson to make a well informed decision. It is our recommendation that no changes be made to your practice policy at this time.

Sincerely,



David Chun, M.D.  
Director-Women's Imaging Services

DC/kd