

## Cancer Screening Tip of the Month – September 2024

Toronto Central Regional Cancer Program, Cancer Screening eBulletin

### Ontario Breast Screening Program (OBSP) Expansion to People Ages 40 to 49: Starting October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024

The average risk [Ontario Breast Screening Program \(OBSP\)](#) will expand to include eligible women, Two-Spirit people, trans people and non-binary people ages 40 to 49 on **October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024**.

#### OBSP Screening Mammography Recommendations for Average Risk People Ages 40 to 49:

- The [eligibility criteria](#), [screening recommendations and screening interval](#) for average risk people ages 40 to 49 will be the same as for people ages 50 to 74.
- Starting **October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024**, people ages 40 to 49 who qualify for the OBSP and decide to get screened can self-refer and book an appointment by contacting an [OBSP location](#).
- Before getting screened, people ages 40 to 49 are encouraged to make an **informed decision** about breast cancer screening by having a conversation with a primary care provider, Health811 navigator or prevention specialist.

#### Potential Benefits and Potential Harms of Screening:

Regardless of age, regular breast cancer screening can have potential benefits and potential harms:

- **Potential benefits:** finding breast cancer early, which may mean that: treatment has a better chance of working; treatment can be less intensive or invasive; and the chance of dying from breast cancer is lower.
- **Potential harms:** false positive results which may lead to unnecessary additional testing; and finding a cancer that would have never caused harm if left untreated (overdiagnosis).

#### Starting Screening at Age 40 Compared to Age 50:

Generally, people ages 40-49 have a lower chance of getting breast cancer compared to people ages 50-74.

| Comparison of screening starting at age 40 vs. 50 over a lifetime (per 1,000 women*) | Screened every 2 years starting at age 40 | Screened every 2 years starting at age 50 |
|--|---|---|
| 1 to 2 more deaths prevented   | 8.4 / 1000                                | 6.9 / 1000                                |
| 519 more false positives   | 1,540                                     | 1,021                                     |
| 2 more cases overdiagnosed   | 12 / 1000                                 | 10 / 1000                                 |
| 62 more unnecessary biopsies   | 210 / 1000                                | 148 / 1000                                |

Source: <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2818285>

\*The data are not inclusive of all gender diversity and may incorrectly classify people whose gender identity differs from their sex assigned at birth.

Primary care providers can learn more about the OBSP expansion to people ages 40 to 49 at the Ontario Health webinar on **Thursday, October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024 from 12:00 – 1:00 pm: Register [here](#)**

Patient resources will be available on October 8<sup>th</sup>.

Click [here](#) to view the previous Cancer Screening Tip of the Month eBulletins.

**Questions?** If you have any questions or if you would like to receive the Cancer Screening Tip of the Month please email the Toronto Central Regional Cancer Program, Cancer Screening team: [infoTCRCP@sunnybrook.ca](mailto:infoTCRCP@sunnybrook.ca)