

Despite Lack of Indicators, Use Of Breast MRIs Rising.

[HealthDay](#) (11/19, Doheny) reports on two studies published online in the journal JAMA Internal Medicine. The first found the “use of breast MRIs has nearly tripled in recent years, but the women who could benefit the most are not always getting the expensive imaging test.” The researchers noted that more women at high risk are undergoing screening, which “suggest[s] that breast MRI is being used better.” However, the second study “found that breast MRIs between 2000 and 2011 jumped 20-fold, then declined and stabilized by 2011. But less than half of women with documented genetic mutations that raise the risk of breast cancer got the...tests.”

[MedPage Today](#) (11/19, Bankhead) reports the co-author of the second study, Natasha K. Stout, PhD, of Harvard, wrote, “Our data suggest that the majority of women who underwent screening for breast MRI did not meet the recommended criteria for appropriate use, whereas many who did meet the criteria did not undergo screening breast MRI.” Stout and her colleagues concluded, “However, to clearly understand appropriateness of use, better documentation of breast cancer risk is needed,” with an emphasis on knowing who receives “breast MRI and the downstream consequences of this use should be a high research priority to ensure that...healthcare funds...are used wisely to maximize population health.”

[Modern Healthcare](#) (11/18, Lee, Subscription Publication) and [Aunt Minnie](#) (11/19, Forrest) also report on the story.

In a related story, [HealthImaging](#) (11/19, Steere) reports the US Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) has started “updating its recommendations on screening for breast cancer.” The USPSTF created “a Research Plan that will frame the scope, conduct, and content of a systematic evidence review,” and a draft of the Research Plan is posted for public comment until Dec. 11.