

### **Study Shows Mammograms, Self-Exams Useful For Cancer Detection.**

Medscape (9/7, Nelson) reports on a study presented at the 2011 Breast Cancer Symposium in which analysis revealed that "in...almost 6000 women with breast cancer, 65.5% of breast cancers were detected by mammography, 29.8% by palpation, and 4.7% by other methods. In women under the age of 50 years," 48.3% were detected by mammography and 46.1% by palpitation. Palpable tumors were more likely to be advanced, and "women with tumors detected by palpation were more likely to undergo mastectomy" or chemotherapy. The researchers concluded "that annual mammogram and evaluation of palpable breast masses are important tools."

HealthDay (9/7, Gardner) reports, "In 2009, the US Preventive Services Task Force set off a furor when it recommended that women wait until the age of 50 before having regular mammograms, and even then they counseled that mammograms should take place once every two years rather than annually."

WebMD (9/7, Laino) reports that George F. Sawaya, MD, a member of the US Preventive Services Task Force, "says that the researchers fail to mention potential harms -- including anxiety, unnecessary biopsies, and unnecessary treatment of cancers that would never become life threatening -- against which one might weigh benefits." Sawaya added, "The recommendation for women under 50 years is to make individualized decisions based on benefits and harms." The American College of Radiology continues "to advise women to begin routine screening annually at age 40."