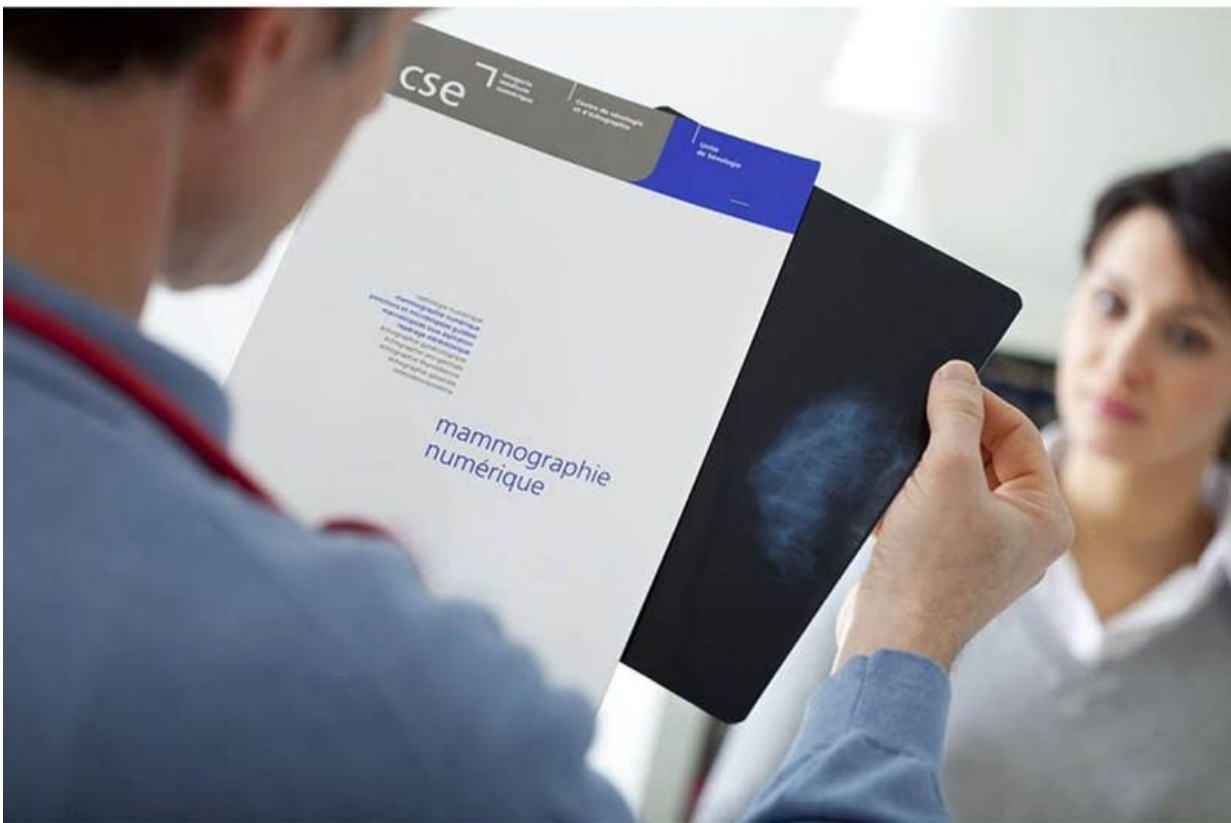


Screening mammograms plummeted during COVID-19 pandemic

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(HealthDay)—Substantially fewer women completed screening

mammograms at one safety-net hospital during the first year of the pandemic, with Black women experiencing the lowest volumes compared with other racial/ethnic groups, according to a research letter published online Aug. 6 in *JAMA Network Open*.

Ana I. Velazquez, M.D., from the University of California in San Francisco, and colleagues evaluated the effect of COVID-19 and breast cancer screening in a safety-net hospital in San Francisco. Electronic health record data were used to determine the aggregate numbers of screening mammograms per month between Sept. 1, 2019, and Jan. 31, 2021.

The researchers found that volumes in 2020 were 60 percent of 2019 (5,662 during 2019 versus 3,385 in 2020). Volumes also decreased for the mobile mammography unit (831 during 2019 to 248 in 2020, with 0 mammograms completed between April and June 2020). Additionally, the number of missed appointments increased during 2020 compared with September 2019 to January 2020 (pre-COVID-19). At all time points, Black women had the lowest proportion of completed mammograms, while [younger women](#) had the lowest proportion during the first stay-at-home order, and older women (≥ 70 years) had the lowest proportion during the second stay-at-home order.

"Although vaccination efforts are a top priority, health care systems should leverage COVID-19-related community outreach and engagement to develop concerted efforts that promote preventive care and ensure preexisting disparities do not worsen among communities with higher risk," the authors write.

More information: [Abstract/Full Text](#)

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