The European Commission’s science and knowledge service

Joint Research Centre
The European Breast Guidelines from the ECIBC: translating the evidence to enable informed healthcare decisions across settings

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Breast cancer: The most common cancer in European women and the first cause of death from cancer

Variations in incidence, mortality and survival suggest disparities across European countries

Female breast cancer 5 year relative survival – 2000-2007

Aims: European Commission Initiative on Breast Cancer (ECIBC)

- To improve the quality of Breast Cancer (BC) care services across EU while reducing health inequalities therein.

Objectives:
- Evidence-based Breast Cancer Guidelines
- Quality Assurance scheme for breast cancer services

Aims of European Breast Guidelines
- Recommendations on screening and diagnosis
  - **Web-based** and specifically tailored to
    - women
    - health professionals
Methods

• JRC coordinates GDG and SRT to develop guidelines.

• Developed by the multidisciplinary GDG using Evidence to Decision Frameworks and constantly updated.

• Organises the evidence for decision-makers and for users using 12 criteria.

• Systematic reviews carried out by Cochrane Iberoamerica
Methods: Making recommendations - balance of all factors

- Benefits and harms
- Certainty in evidence
- Values
- Acceptability
- Feasibility
- Equity
- Costs

For

Against
Women between 50-69: screening every 2 or 3 years

In the context of an organised screening programme, for:

- asymptomatic women
- aged 50 to 69
- with an average risk of breast cancer

the ECIBC's Guideline Development Group (GDG):

- recommends mammography screening
  (strong recommendation, moderate certainty of the evidence)
- recommends against annual mammography screening
  (strong recommendation, very low certainty of the evidence)
- suggests biennial mammography screening
  (conditional recommendation, very low certainty of the evidence)

MORE INFORMATION

Details for professionals: Screening at 50-69
Details for professionals: Comparison of frequencies
Annual screening vs. triennial at 50-69
Triennial screening vs. biennial at 50-69
Summary of the comparisons

Summary information for women
What you need to know
Screening for women between 50-69

Question
Should organised mammography screening vs. no mammography screening be used for early detection of breast cancer in women aged of 50 to 69?

Recommendation
For asymptomatic women aged 50 to 69 with an average risk of breast cancer, the ECIBC's Guideline Development Group (GDG) recommends mammography screening over no mammography screening, in the context of an organised screening programme.

Recommendation strength
- Strong recommendation for the intervention
- Moderate certainty of the evidence

Recommendation in question/answer format

Recommendation strength and certainty of the evidence
Considerations for implementation of policies

Despite being a strong recommendation, women should be provided with the information regarding benefits and harms of screening.

Additional considerations

This recommendation does not apply to high-risk women (see recommendations for women with high breast density).

Supporting documents

- "Evidence to Decision": recommendation justification, considerations and assessment
  - English (1.2 MB - PDF - 10 pages)
  - Download

- "Evidence profile": quality assessment of the evidence from literature review and summary of findings
  - English (788 kB - PDF - 8 pages)
  - Download

- Bibliography
  - English (700 kB - PDF - 20 pages)
  - Download
Results: Summary and Limits

- Approximately 80 final recommendations will be published by end 2019 – 65 already on web

- Updating strategy developed and piloted in 2018, so far 2 recommendations updated

- Limits: The official language for the publication of the guidelines on the web is English which may somewhat limit their use in countries where this language is not commonly used.
Bottom line

• Multidisciplinary, transparent & robust development process and online publication of complete EtDs enhances implementation of the guidelines across countries.

• National guidelines developers looking at ECIBC recommendations:
  
  o **Published**: Bahrein, Bulgaria and Tunisia
  o **Ongoing**: Italy, Czech Republic, Estonia and Slovakia
  o **Manifested interest**: Germany, Norway, Denmark, China, Spain, Chile
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