False-Positive Cancer Screening Results Prompt Future Testing

This is particularly true among people who have false-positive breast or prostate cancer screening results.

April 27, 2018 By Alicia Green

False-positive cancer screening test results are quite common. And in many instances, people who receive false positive results are more likely to obtain future screenings, suggest findings published in the journal Cancer, reports the Wiley News Room.

Researchers gathered 10 years of electronic medical records data on 92,405 individuals ages 50 to 75 to analyze the association between prior receipt of a false-positive cancer screening test result and participation in future cancer screenings.

According to study findings, women with false-positive mammogram results were more likely to get future breast cancer screenings as well as colorectal cancer screenings. However, women with a false-positive result on a fecal blood test for colorectal cancer weren’t as current with their breast cancer screenings.

Men with prior false-positive prostate cancer screening test results were 22 percent more likely to obtain future colorectal cancer screenings.

Researchers concluded that “patients who previously had a false-positive breast or prostate cancer screening test were more likely to engage in future screening,” although study author Glen Taksler, PhD, of the Cleveland Clinic noted that other studies have yielded conflicting results, indicating the need for more research.

Click here to learn more about cancer screenings.