

Cancer and race: Why Black women are more likely to die from breast cancer than White women

Researchers have long been trying to understand why African American women are more likely than white women in the U.S. to die of breast cancer. Although experts agree the problem is complex, new research points to inferior screening as one culprit.

The studies, published earlier this year in the [Journal of the American College of Radiology](#) and [JAMA Network Open](#), found that Black people and other people of color were less likely to get 3D mammograms than white people. (The same was true for women with lower income or less education in one of the studies.)

“It’s partly about availability,” said Linda Goler Blount, president of the Black Women’s Health Imperative and an author of the JACR paper. “But when they went to facilities that offer both (3D and 2D), Blacks were still more likely to get 2D — even though providers know 3D is superior.”

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“This speaks to medical bias,” said Blount. “Someone at the facility is making the choice. The average woman has no idea there’s a difference — nor should she. This is even more devastating, because Black women get breast cancer younger, and their cancers tend to be diagnosed at later stages. If we have a better form of detection, we should be using it.”

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