

Georgia's New Breast Density Legislation ("Margie's Law")

As most of you know, the State of Georgia recently passed legislation (HB 62, also known as "Margie's Law") requiring direct notification when the patient is deemed to have dense breast tissue (defined as either ACR BI-RADS "heterogeneously dense" or "extremely dense" categories) on mammography. The following language is mandated to be included in the lay summary letter already being sent to patients, as of July 1, 2019:

"Your mammogram shows that your breast tissue is dense. Dense breast tissue is very common and is not abnormal. However, dense breast tissue can make it more difficult to detect cancer through a mammogram. Also, dense breast tissue may increase your risk for breast cancer. This information about the result of your mammogram is given to you to increase your awareness. Use this information to talk with your health care provider about whether other supplemental tests in addition to your mammogram may be appropriate for you, based on your individual risk. A report of your results was sent to your ordering physician. If you are self-referred, a report of your results was sent to you in addition to this summary."

As a result, radiologists can expect to see an increase in inquiries from patients and our referring colleagues about what next step, if any, is indicated to provide supplemental screening for individual women.

As of yet, we don't have a one-size-fits-all solution. The possible choices (whole-breast screening ultrasound, both automated and handheld, digital breast tomosynthesis, and breast MRI, possibly using abbreviated technique) each have benefits in addition to potential drawbacks. At this point, an honest consultation with both caregivers and patients seems to be the best approach, allowing women to make an informed decision in association with their physician.

I have attached some references and resources below that may help inform these consultations. Using these, each individual practice and institution can develop its own supplemental screening approach so that best care can be provided.

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<https://www.acr.org/Advocacy-and-Economics/ACR-Position-Statements/Reporting-Breast-Density>

<https://www.acr.org/Advocacy-and-Economics/ACR-Position-Statements/Breast-Cancer-Screening-in-Women-at-Higher-Than-Average-Risk>

<https://www.acr.org/Advocacy-and-Economics/ACR-Position-Statements/Breast-Cancer-Screening-for-Average-Risk-Women>

American College of Radiology ACR Appropriateness Criteria® Breast Cancer Screening:
<https://acsearch.acr.org/list/GetAppendix?TopicId=179>

Society of Breast Imaging white paper on Breast Density and Supplemental Screening:
<https://www.sbi-online.org/RESOURCES/WhitePapers/TabId/595/ArtMID/1617/ArticleID/596/Breast-Density-and-Supplemental-Screening.aspx#.XU2Tr3956bs.mailto>

<http://www.breastdensity.info/>

ACR Patient Brochures on Breast Density:

◦English: https://www.acr.org/-/media/ACR/Files/Breast-Imaging-Resources/Breast-Density_bro_ACR_SBI_low-res.pdf?la=en

◦Spanish: https://www.acraccreditation.org/-/media/ACRAccreditation/Mammography-Saves-Lives/Files/Breast-Density-Bro_Spanish_low-res.pdf?la=en