Why should you begin annual mammography screening at 40?

- It results in the greatest mortality reduction, the most lives saved and the most life years gained. The years of life lost to breast cancer are highest for women in their 40's.
- Breast cancer incidence increases substantially around age 40. The incidence rate for ages 40-44 is twice that for ages 35-39. In fact, one in six breast cancers occur in women aged 40-49.
- Forty percent of all the years of life saved by mammography are among women in their 40s.
- The largest and longest running breast cancer screening trials found that regular mammography screening cuts breast cancer deaths by roughly a third in all women ages 40 and over.
- Annual screening starting at age 40 saves approximately 6,500 more women's lives each year in the U.S. than screening every other year starting at age 50.
- A recent study showed that more than 70 percent of the women who died from breast cancer in their 40s -at major Harvard teaching hospitals were among the 20 percent of women who were not being screened.
- Current science cannot determine which cancers will advance to kill a woman and which will not; therefore all women 40 and older should be screened annually.
- Women experience short term anxiety regarding breast cancer screening test results but it rapidly declines over time and there is no measurable effect to their health. Additionally, nearly all women who experienced a false-positive exam support screening.
- Every major American medical organization with expertise in breast cancer care, including the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, American Cancer Society, American College of Radiology, National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers and Society of Breast Imaging agree that starting annual mammography at age 40 saves the most lives.

Things to know about breast cancer screening

- The goal of breast cancer screening is to reduce deaths from breast cancer by detecting it early, when treatment is more effective and less harmful.
- According to National Cancer Institute, since mammography screening became widespread in the early 1990's, the U.S. breast cancer death rate, unchanged for the previous 50 years, decreased over 30 percent.
- Seventy-five percent of women diagnosed with breast cancer have no special identifiable risk factors: screening only women with risk factors will miss the vast majority of women who will develop breast cancer.
- Mammography is the only test proven to reduce breast cancer mortality. Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), ultrasound, and sometimes nuclear medicine techniques, can show small breast cancers, but studies have not yet been performed to show that these techniques reduce mortality from breast cancer.

SOCIETY OF BREAST IMAGING
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Too many organizations are saying too many confusing and contradictory things about breast cancer screening.

It is time to END THE CONFUSION.