

***Saturado: Barriers and facilitators of mammography screening in Costa Rica***

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## Abstract

Routine mammography screening is the most effective way to detect breast cancer. Early detection improves survival rates. Costa Rica is known throughout Central America for its access to care with a universal healthcare system. A qualitative descriptive study was conducted to explore barriers and facilitators to mammography screening in Costa Rica. Semi-structured interviews were conducted on a sample of 10 Costa Rican women regarding behaviors and knowledge related to mammography screening. Interviews were audio-taped and transcribed verbatim. Limitations of this study include convenience sampling as all 10 women were from the same small town in Costa Rica. Qualitative descriptive techniques were used to analyze the data. Findings show that barriers to mammography screening include long wait times and inability to get appointments. Facilitators to mammography screening include having connections or financial resources to pay for private mammography centers. Although access to preventive screening is available to everyone in the universal healthcare system in Costa Rica, the findings from this study suggest that the Costa Rican healthcare system is saturated and unable to meet the demands of the population. This study helps to inform future studies regarding preventive health in order to develop strategies to improve mammography screening use in Costa Rica.