Do You Need a Mammogram? Maybe Not Yet.

What do the changes in breast cancer screening guidelines from the American Cancer Society (ACS) mean for you and your loved ones?

Are you familiar with the current ACS breast cancer screening guidelines? They’re good to know, even though the most important recommendations are the ones that come from your doctor, who knows your medical history and can give you specific guidance. However, since doctors often refer to these recommendations when advising you, you should be aware of significant changes.

For women with an average breast cancer risk, the ACS:

• Recommends that women speak with their doctor by age 40 about which mammogram schedule is appropriate for them.

• Recommends that women begin having mammograms at age 45 – no longer at age 40, which the ACS had previously recommended. The ACS also says that women should have the opportunity to begin annual screening between the ages of 40 and 44 if they so choose.

• Recommends that if women continue to be cancer free at age 55, they consider reducing the frequency of mammograms to every other year.

According to the ACS, the recommendation to delay mammograms for most women is based on its research regarding false positives and the potential risks of the exam.

However, women who are considered at high risk for breast cancer – because of family history, a breast condition or another reason – need to begin screenings earlier and have them more often. Women should speak with their doctors about their risk level.

To find out about your specific preventive care benefits, call the number on the back of your Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey member ID card.

For general guidelines about what preventive tests and screenings are appropriate for you and your loved ones based on factors such as age and gender, visit HorizonBlue.com/preventive.

Sources: International Osteoporosis Foundation, Centers for Disease Control and WebMD®

NJWELL is an incentive-based wellness program offered to active employees and their covered spouses who participate in the SHBP/SEHBP. More detail can be found on http://www.nj.gov/njwell/.

Preventive care services and screenings are only covered when rendered by an in-network doctor or other health care professional. Immunizations received for travel outside the country or for work-related reasons are not covered. Well-child immunizations for children less than 12 months of age are the only immunizations allowed out-of-network.

This information has been created and supplied to you courtesy of Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey. The information is general in nature and is intended to provide you with increased understanding of the topics discussed to help you and your family get and stay healthy. It is not intended as a substitute for the professional advice and care of your doctor. If you have any questions or concerns about your health or the health of any of your family members, consult your doctor.

NJ DIRECT and OMNIA are administered by Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey (Horizon BCBSNJ) and Horizon HMO is administered by Horizon Health-care of New Jersey, Inc. (HHNJ). Both Horizon BCBSNJ and HHNJ are independent licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.

The Blue Cross® and Blue Shield® names and symbols are registered marks of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.

The Horizon® name and symbols are registered marks of Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey.

© 2016 Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey. Three Penn Plaza East, Newark, New Jersey 07105.

Learn more at HorizonBlue.com/shbp

31995 (0916)