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BREAST CANCER SCREENING

Delays Are Killing Black Women—Here's What Maimonides Is Doing About It



The COVID-19 pandemic has claimed millions of lives all across the world, but many of the people we've lost have died from other diseases, including cancer. Numerous people canceled or delayed routine cancer screenings and treatment during the pandemic.

In fact, **over 37%** of elective cancer surgeries and **3.9 million breast cancer screenings** were canceled at the height of the pandemic in efforts to mitigate COVID-19 transmission and deaths. These delays have undoubtedly increased the risk of death and complications for breast cancer among all people, but People of Color are likely to bear the brunt of it.

White women are **most likely to develop breast cancer**, followed by Black, Native American, and Asian women. Hispanic women are least likely to develop breast cancer. Despite increased odds for getting breast cancer, White women are less likely to die from it than Black women—and Asian women are **least likely to die**.

Prior to the pandemic, breast cancer deaths were **40% higher** for Black women than White women. Black women are also diagnosed at younger ages and among those who do have breast cancer, **20% are triple negative**, which is the **hardest to treat**.

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Maimonides' Dedicated Breast Cancer Specialists Urge Patients to Continue Getting Annual Screenings—Especially Black Women

Models suggest **nearly 2,500 excess deaths** from breast cancer by 2030 due to delays in screening and treatment during the pandemic. The actual number depends on how quickly healthcare professionals can work through patients who are overdue for screening.

“Breast cancer is still the second leading cause of death in this country,” **Donna-Marie Manasseh, MD**, Director of Breast Surgery at Maimonides, explains. “COVID-19 has crept up as number three, but we predict that number won’t continue to rise. However, breast cancer will still be there, unfortunately.”

Annual screenings **starting at age 40** saves the most lives.

“When cancer is detected earlier -- before you can feel a lump -- is when it’s most treatable and the options are better,” says **Christina Giuliano, MD**, Chief, Breast Imaging. “If you wait until you feel a lump, that is usually years later.”

Guidelines differ for those with a higher risk. Those with a family history of breast cancer or a BRCA mutation should have screenings at younger ages—**as young as age 30**.

“A mammogram is like a seat belt - If you have a seatbelt on and are in an accident, it can save your life. Mammography is the same idea- if you are one of the unfortunate women who develops breast cancer, it can find it early and save your life,” says Dr. Giuliano.


Breast Cancer Specialists at Maimonides Are Proud to Give Patients Their Best Shot at Life

There are several clinical trials for breast cancer treatment at Maimonides. One of the most promising trials this year weaponizes a patient’s own immune system against breast cancer.

Patrick Borgen, MD, Chair of the Department of Surgery and head of the Maimonides Breast Center at the Maimonides Cancer Center, thinks these trials are paving the way for better treatments and outcomes. “We’re making sure that what we’re offering our patients is the best chance of a cure, is their best chance of long term survival, is their best chance of minimizing toxicities.”

Even with these breakthroughs in treatment, prevention and early detection will always render the best outcomes.

As a result, patients need to stay on top of their annual mammograms. Maimonides is the only breast center in Brooklyn that is fully accredited by the National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers (NAPBC) for four years running, making it hands down the best place for a mammogram in the borough and for care after a diagnosis.

For more evidence of our doctors’ dedication, check out our [Event Recap: Ride 2 Live](#), where our Maimonides Breast Center leaders and staff ride motorcycles to raise awareness of breast cancer. 

Maimonides Sets the Bar with Exceptional PCI & CABG Outcomes

The **Heart & Vascular Institute at Maimonides Medical Center** has been a premiere facility for cardiac care for many years. In fact, the department **earned perfect scores from US News & World Report for heart failure and heart attack care** earlier this year. This distinction is well deserved given the Heart & Vascular Institute's long list of accolades.

can also treat this complex, life-threatening condition with coronary artery bypass graft (CABG) surgery. The STS Adult Cardiac Surgery Database recognizes our exceptional skills and outcomes for open heart CABG surgery with the highest score possible—three stars for statistically better CABG outcomes than expected. Such results were made possible by the leadership of Robert Frankel, MD, Vice Chair, Cardiology and Director of Interventional Cardiology and Paul Saunders, MD, board-certified cardiothoracic surgeon and Co-Director of the Left Ventricular Assist Device (LVAD) Program.



Expert cardiologists at the Heart & Vascular Institute are especially skilled in percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI), a minimally invasive procedure that addresses narrow coronary arteries. It can relieve chest pain and reduce other symptoms of atherosclerosis.

Consistently Better Outcomes for Over a Decade

Patients at Maimonides Heart & Vascular Institute experience better PCI outcomes than the statewide average, and we're the only hospital in New York State to achieve that for 11 years in a row (2006–2018).

PCI isn't always the best treatment for patients who have atherosclerosis. Our highly skilled surgeons

Maimonides Heart & Vascular Institute physicians are consistently among the best providers for cardiac care throughout Brooklyn and the rest of New York State.

"Whether patients need routine monitoring, minimally invasive procedures like PCI, or open heart CABG surgery, we're proud to be a preferred destination for patients and providers alike," Dr. Frankel said.

Getting exceptional cardiac care for your patients is easy at Maimonides' exceptional Heart & Vascular Institute. Call (718) HRT-BEAT to refer a patient to our highly skilled and dedicated team. ■■■

NICU: Taking Care of Our Littlest Patients

Bringing a child into the world can be an exciting and fulfilling event. Even under the best of circumstances, it is an overwhelming, stressful time for new parents. What happens when life doesn't go as planned? A premature birth, unexpected health issue, or complications can land Maimonides' youngest patients in the **neonatal intensive care unit** (NICU). With so much on the line, it's important for NICU babies to get the best care available. Excellent care and outcomes are standard in the Maimonides NICU. Our team goes the extra mile to not only nurse babies back to health and support parents during this transition.

Maimonides' Compassionate NICU Team Goes Above and Beyond

An in-house, board certified neonatal attending is on duty 24-7, 365 days to oversee patients in the Maimonides' NICU, which is the largest NICU in Brooklyn. No matter the number of patients, **Dr. Alok Bhutada**, Chief, Division of Newborn Medicine and his department at Maimonides' Children's Hospital, make a point of developing relationships with each and every NICU family."

Aside from specialized training, working in the NICU requires a great



deal of compassion and empathy," Dr. Bhutada explains. Parents and babies also benefit from the dedicated and devoted highly experienced nursing staff and the rest of the team. Keeping an eye on their newest addition is easy and convenient with **web cameras** parents can access 24/7 when they're away from the hospital.

No Better Place for NICU patients in Brooklyn


Receiving high-quality care for NICU patients in Brooklyn starts with the team at Maimonides. The NICU at Maimonides is the largest of its kind in Brooklyn and one of the 17 regional perinatal centers in New York State.

During their stay, parents are taught how to care for their little ones once they are home.

For our tiniest babies, we have a private separate room where they learn to take care of their baby before they're discharged. It's a warm, inviting environment where they can practice with the help of medical staff nearby.

Brooklyn pediatricians can also feel at ease referring infants to the Maimonides NICU. We provide comprehensive care for heart conditions, neurological disorders, infections, and many other life-threatening conditions. Call Maimonides Children's Hospital to partner with our neonatal specialists to provide critical care for your littlest patients.

Take a look at [current patient Joseph](#) receiving excellent care at the Maimonides NICU.

For a closer look at the Maimonides NICU, visit [here](#). 





Advanced AFib Treatment Options Give Maimonides Patients a New Lease on Life

The Heart & Vascular Institute at Maimonides provides patients with lifesaving treatment for a wide variety of cardiovascular health conditions. This world-class team of cardiovascular specialists and surgeons have earned distinctions including ranking among Healthgrades America's 50 Best Hospitals for Cardiac Surgery for two years running.

These accolades come as a direct result of the excellent, patient-centered model of care they prioritize for each and every patient. Rohan Patel, MD, FACC and Benjamin Youdelman, MD are among the skilled doctors who treat patients, often in a time of great need. This was the case for Isolde, a patient of Dr. Patel's who need immediate medical attention for atrial fibrillation (AFib) in June of last year.

Coordinating a Transfer of Care After An Unexpected Diagnosis

Isolde, an electrical engineer by trade, works in public safety in New York City. She maintains an active lifestyle, so it was quite the surprise when she learned she had AFib after a trip to urgent care. On that fateful day, she sought care because of pain in her shoulder and left arm. Little did

she know she would need surgery that very same day.

After examining her, urgent care clinicians diagnosed Isolde with AFib, which is an arrhythmia that causes the atria of the heart to shudder. Her diagnosis was a complete surprise as Isolde had written off her symptoms as signs of aging.

"The urgent care contacted an ambulance to take me to a hospital immediately," Isolde recalls. "When the ambulance came to get me, the paramedics encouraged me to come to Maimonides and I trusted their judgement."

Emergency Intervention for Undiagnosed AFib Saved Isolde's Life

When Isolde reached Maimonides, Dr. Patel took charge of her care. "She was suffering from persistent AFib, which wasn't responding to traditional conservative measures and medications," he explained. "It was reducing her heart function and causing heart failure."

In addition to the symptoms Isolde experienced, her AFib put her at risk for stroke and several other life-threatening cardiovascular conditions. These risks can't be overstated. One (1) in 3 people who have a stroke also have AFib, so appropriate and timely treatment is critical for improved patient outcomes.

So, Dr. Patel opted for ablation to stabilize Isolde's condition. "We have a comprehensive atrial fibrillation ablation program at Maimonides. **This includes pulsed field ablation and convergent hybrid AFib ablation, which sets us apart from 99% of other centers across the US,**" he said.

These advanced treatments are "best applied with coordination between electrophysiologists and cardiothoracic surgeons," Dr. Youdelman explains. "Together, we use all available technology at our disposal to treat the risk of embolization, hemodynamic problems, and symptoms of atrial fibrillation."

A Full Recovery and Return to Everyday Activities

"Isolde underwent ablation and had complete recovery of her heart function within six months," Dr. Patel shared. "In fact, she hasn't had AFib since!"

"Watching her symptoms go away and regaining her full quality of life gives me significant hope that, with continuing improvements in the field, we can achieve similar successes for all AFib patients if we see them early and can treat them aggressively from the outset."

"Coming to Maimonides puts you in the best of care if you have a heart condition," Isolde said. "Go to Maimonides and you will be well taken care of!"



Event recap: The Great Hiring

Maimonides Health was thrilled to officially welcome more than 135 new physicians to Maimonides, with a reception to celebrate each who have joined over the past many months. We are so proud that each of these doctors could choose to practice anywhere and chose to join Maimonides and support our mission of delivering exceptional care to our fellow Brooklynites! See [photos](#) from the event. 📸



Maimonides Welcomes Dr. Jared Rowley, Award-Winning Radiation Oncologist

New innovations and research in cancer care are a priority among the specialists in the Maimonides Cancer Center. As such, we're always looking to bring the best and brightest in oncology to our staff to continue providing the best possible care to our patients and their families.

Jared Rowley, MD, is one of Maimonides' newest doctors who brings a wealth of knowledge, experience,

and research to the Cancer Center. In addition to over a dozen published peer-reviewed articles, Dr. Rowley has also been recognized for clinical excellence and as a JetBlue healthcare hero during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Pursuing Radiation Oncology After a Long Career in Neuroimaging Research

"After five fascinating years of neuroimaging research at McGill University, I felt the need to pursue a career in which treatment could more readily improve quality of life," he explained. "This epiphany led me to medical school."

As his schooling came to a close, he wasn't sure what his specialty would be until a chance encounter. "Radiation oncology is the perfect intersection of research, imaging, and patient care, all while using the highest quality evidence to dictate clinical decisions."


Now, he's an established radiation oncologist specializing in cancers of the thorax and genitourinary tract. There's no doubt his patients and the rest of the specialists in the Maimonides Cancer Center will

benefit from his deep knowledge and experience.

Ready to Serve His Community Through Maimonides.

For the past nine years, Dr. Rowley's been a Brooklyn resident, so working at Maimonides is a natural transition in his career. "There are so many great doctors working in the Maimonides Cancer Center. I'm excited to work and collaborate with them."

As he joins the extraordinary team at Maimonides' Cancer Center, Dr. Rowley's excited to contribute to the expansion of the stereotactic body radiation therapy (SBRT) program. This innovative treatment uses focused radiation to treat cancer in many different parts of the body.

"I'm also continuing to work on research related to resident physician education, research productivity, physician job market, gender, and bibliometrics in radiation oncology," he explained. There's no doubt his findings will help inform resident education and impact radiation oncology treatments in the future. 

NEW PROVIDERS

New Providers, October 2022

- ◆ **Sara Carlini, MD** Psychiatry 718-283-7864
- ◆ **Saurav Chatterjee, MD** Cardiology, 718-283-7712
- ◆ **Isaac Gammal, MD** Orthopedic Surgery 718-283-7400
- ◆ **Prayag Patel, MD** Otolaryngology/ENT 283-6260
- ◆ **Jonathan Perk, MD** Neurology 718-283-7431
- ◆ **Nurur Rahman, MD** Psychiatry, 718-283-7864
- ◆ **Matthew Schwartz, MD** Psychiatry 718-283-7864
- ◆ **Eileen Sweeney, MD** Psychiatry 718-283-7864
- ◆ **Shruti Tiwari, MD** Psychiatry 718-283-7864



Featured Podcast



Maimo MedTalk: **I Have Breast Cancer: Now What?**

Breast cancer is still all too common but the last few years have brought more targeted therapies and other important advances in treatment.

Dr. Joshua Feinberg discusses the latest in breast cancer care and what Maimonides Breast Center has to offer. The Maimonides Breast Center is the only NAPBC program in Brooklyn, which is the highest distinction for clinical excellence and reflects our commitment to patients.

[Listen Here](#)