

# Shifting Landscapes: Rising Trends in Breast and Colon Cancer Screenings

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## INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

As healthcare policies evolve and screening guidelines are updated, adoption of mammograms and colonoscopies is expected to rise, leading to earlier detection. This may further strain healthcare resources, particularly among demographic groups historically under-prioritized for screening, with age and gender influencing these trends.

This research aims to explore how up-to-date monitoring of screening trends, driven by real-world data (RWD) from de-identified medical claims, can provide insights into the impact of earlier detection and increased access to non-invasive screening methods on healthcare utilization and resource demand, and how the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force's updated guidance on screening in recent years impacted patient behavior.

## METHODS

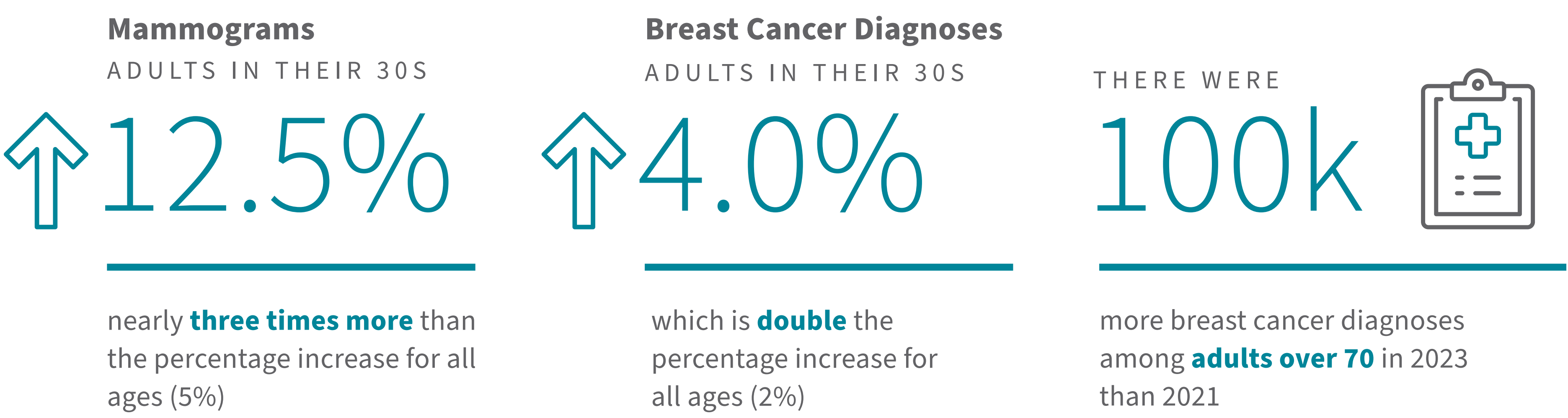
Quantitative analyses were conducted using approximately one billion de-identified patient-level medical claims between 2021 and 2023 to analyze utilization rates of mammograms, colonoscopies and non-invasive colon cancer screening tests.

## RESULTS

Among adults in their 30s, mammograms increased by 12.5%, nearly three times more than the percentage increase for all ages, and breast cancer diagnoses increased by 4%, double the percentage increase for all ages. There was a total increase of 100,000 breast cancer diagnoses among adults over 70 in 2023 compared to 2021.

Colonoscopies increased by 90% among 45-50-year-olds and 16% across all other age groups. Double-digit increases occurred in at-home, non-invasive DNA-based testing (30.5%) and FIT testing (19.7%) among 40-49-year-olds.

## INCREASED BREAST CANCER SCREENINGS AND DIAGNOSES AMONG PATIENTS IN THEIR 30S AND 70S



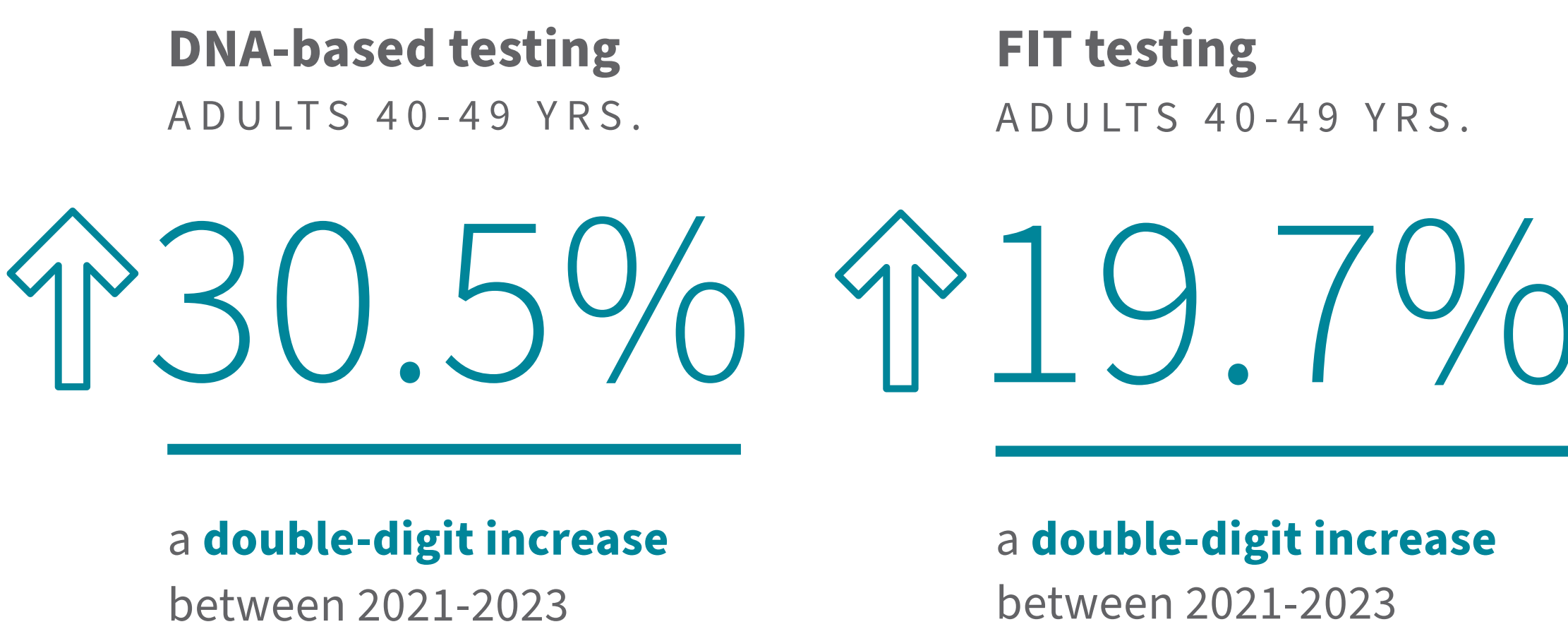
Despite a decline in breast cancer deaths over the past decade, a troubling trend has emerged as diagnoses among younger adults increased over the same period. The uptick in breast cancer rates among 50- and 40-year-olds is well documented, but the analyzed data now show a recent increase in diagnoses among adults in their 30s. The data demonstrate the importance of regular screenings – updated guidelines are an important first step, but participation is critical. Healthcare organizations need timely data and market insights to uncover the latest trends within their communities so they can more effectively design programs that address disparities, improve access to resources and care, and in turn improve engagement and increase participation in screenings.

## DISCUSSION

Rising early detection rates and growing adoption of non-invasive screening methods present opportunities for improved outcomes and challenges in cost management. Targeted resource allocation is essential to address the growing financial burden on healthcare systems, particularly as diagnoses increase in younger and older adults.

Leveraging RWD from up-to-date de-identified medical claims enables continuous tracking of screening and diagnosis trends, allowing HEOR professionals to identify emerging patterns in cost, treatment pathways and patient outcomes, ultimately informing evidence-based strategies for optimizing resource allocation, enhancing cost-effectiveness and promoting patient-centered, equitable approaches to cancer care.

## DNA-BASED AND FIT SCREENING UTILIZATION



## COLONOSCOPY UTILIZATION AMONG NEWLY RECOMMENDED AGE GROUP (45-50)

In 2021, the USPSTF lowered the recommended age for colon cancer screening for people with average risk from 50 years old to 45. Since then, colonoscopies among 45–50-year-olds increased by 90%. Colonoscopies across all age groups have risen 16%.

