

Health coaches provide Information and decision support with abnormal mammograms

THE SITUATION

Ginny had an abnormal mammogram and was scheduled to have a surgical (open) biopsy the following week. She was worried that she might have breast cancer and scared about having a surgical biopsy. She couldn't sleep, so late one night she called a health coach to learn about the procedure.

KEY POINTS

- Having instant access to a knowledgeable healthcare professional helped reduce Ginny's anxiety about her upcoming biopsy.
- Health Dialog's® Shared Decision-Making® approach helped the member prepare for her biopsy and become an active participant in her healthcare. It also helped her improve her communication skills with her doctor. This more effective communication enabled Ginny to work with her doctor to avoid a more-invasive procedure.
- Using case-finding, the health coach was able to identify additional opportunities to provide support and to build skills with a covered family member newly diagnosed with diabetes.

HEALTH COACHING

- The Health Coach listened to Ginny's concerns and explained that most breast lumps are not cancer. Using information from the Healthwise® Knowledgebase, the health coach described what happens during a surgical biopsy. Ginny was concerned about the invasiveness of the procedure and asked whether she had other options. The health coach explained that there are other types of biopsies and diagnostic tests, and helped Ginny prepare some questions for her doctor so she could find out whether the other options would be appropriate for her situation. The health coach also suggested that Ginny follow up with her health plan's customer service group to explore what options her benefit plan covers.
- The health coach called Ginny to follow up after the doctor appointment. Ginny said that she and her doctor decided that a fine-needle biopsy (which is less-invasive than an open biopsy) would be appropriate and that it was scheduled for the following week. Ginny told the health coach that she was very worried about the test and that she would call the health coach when she received her results. A week later, Ginny called the health coach to share her good news—the biopsy came back normal.

RESULTS

- Ginny took advantage of the 24/7 health coaching service and received support and helpful information during a stressful time.
- The health coach worked with Ginny to identify her personal priorities and helped her work with her doctor to make a shared decision.
- Through this experience, Ginny now feels confident communicating with her doctor and asking important questions. This will influence how she deals with healthcare issues in the future.
- The Health Coach is now providing support to another member of Ginny's household.
- The Health Coach led Ginny to the Healthwise® Knowledgebase, where she can go for reliable health information on her own, anytime.
- Ginny understands her situation and is better able to work with her physician to make the right decisions with future healthcare issues. Ginny's doctor is confident that Ginny has access to reliable, evidence-based information and personal support 24 hours a day, seven days a

week. Working with a well-prepared and well-informed patient allows her doctor to make the best use of her own time and that of her office staff to provide the quality care that she aims to deliver.

This story is a representative example of how a member experiences Health Coaching. Any names and facts of real individuals used to create this story have been changed to protect privacy.