

How screening led to early diagnosis of treatable breast cancer

Video	Audio
<p>Courtesy: Luther College Andrea Beckendorf</p>	<p>"The bass is sort of the foundation of the orchestra. It provides in a lot of cases the harmonic support for the entire ensemble, especially for the string section."</p>
	<p>Much like the role the bass plays in an orchestra, one could say that regular health screenings provide a foundational, fundamental role in a person's lifelong health and well-being. No one knows that better than Andrea Beckendorf.</p>
<p>Andrea Beckendorf Patient</p>	<p>"I talked with my primary care physician back in September. Part of my thinking was: 'Well, it is COVID. Should I do this? Should I not do this.'"</p>
	<p>At 49 years old with no known risk factors for breast cancer, Andrea decided to schedule a regular mammogram during a global pandemic — a decision that may have saved her life.</p>
<p>Andrea Beckendorf</p>	<p>"They saw an area where they wanted me to come back and take another look. And they took a biopsy, and the biopsy revealed that it was cancerous."</p>
	<p>Because of the cancer's small size, location and density of her breast tissue, Andrea's doctors told her ...</p>
<p>Andrea Beckendorf</p>	<p>"... that there's no way that I would have found it with a regular self-exam."</p>
<p>Dr. Daniela Stan</p>	<p>"She had a very early breast cancer. She had the stage 1 breast cancer."</p>
	<p>After the biopsy at her local clinic in Iowa, Andrea came to Mayo Clinic and started a care plan with Dr. Daniela Stan.</p>
<p>Daniela Stan, M.D. General Internal Medicine Mayo Clinic</p>	<p>"Getting mammograms early to discover these cancers — when they are small — is important because the treatments are shorter, not as invasive."</p>

	Dr. Stan says because the cancer was caught early, the prognosis is good, and her treatment was very straightforward. In January, Andrea had a lumpectomy.
Dr. Daniela Stan	"She was fortunate as well to have normal lymph nodes, so that makes it a stage 1. She received a very brief course of radiation, and again, that was based on the tumor size. Usually, if the tumor is less than 2 centimeters, we can do partial breast radiation."
	Partial breast radiation means Andrea only needs five days of radiation versus 15 days. She also won't need chemotherapy.
	Because of the quick diagnosis and straightforward treatment, Andrea has been able to get back to her music much faster.
Andrea Beckendorf	"It's given me something to look forward to both as I've gone through the treatments of being able to play with my students and being able to practice and perform again."
Andrea Beckendorf	"My message would be for folks to have a conversation with their primary care physician. You know, talk with their family if they need to about the importance of getting screened, and then to encourage people to please get screened."
	For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I'm DeeDee Stiepan.