

American Cancer Society Announces New Recommendations Calling for MRI in Breast Cancer

Wed March 28, 2007

The American Cancer Society announces new guidelines for MRI screening for breast cancer in high risk women.

- Women with cancer in one breast should get an MRI scan of the other breast (contra lateral).
- Healthy women at high risk of getting breast cancer should get an annual MRI scan.
- MRI scans should be done along with yearly mammograms (not to replace them).

Cancer in the Opposite Breast

A new study published in the New England Journal of Medicine showed that MRI scans were able to detect cancer in the opposite breast 90 percent of the time. MRI found breast tumors missed by mammography.

The study involved 1000 women with cancer in one breast. The MRI scans found 30 of 33 tumors in the other breast of the women studied, concluding that 1 in 10 women diagnosed with breast cancer in one breast will develop the disease in the opposite breast.

"This study gives us a clearer indication that if an MRI of the opposite breast is negative, women diagnosed with cancer in only one breast can more confidently opt against having a double (or bilateral) mastectomy," says John E. Niederhuber, MD, director of the National Cancer Institute, which sponsored the study.

The study was designed to see if MRI improved detection of cancer in the other breast of women already diagnosed with unilateral breast cancer. It was not designed to find out if MRI is better than mammography.

Women at High Risk

New guidelines recommend women at high risk for breast cancer get screened with MRI scans in addition to mammography, beginning at age 30.

The new guideline is published in the latest issue of the ACS journal *CA: A Cancer Journal for Clinicians*. It recommends MRI screening in addition to mammograms for women who meet at least one of the following conditions:

- they have a BRCA1 or BRCA2 mutation
- they have a first-degree relative (parent, sibling, child) with a BRCA1 or BRCA2 mutation, even if they have yet to be tested themselves
- their lifetime risk of breast cancer has been scored at 20%-25% or greater, based on one of several accepted risk assessment tools that look at family history and other factors
- they had radiation to the chest between the ages of 10 and 30
- they have Li-Fraumeni syndrome, Cowden syndrome, or Bannayan-Riley-Ruvalcaba syndrome, or may have one of these syndromes based on a history in a first-degree relative

Learn more about [Advanced Breast Imaging](#) offered at InView.

[New Recommendations Call for MRI in Breast Cancer, Reuters, 3/28/07](#)

[ACS Advises MRIs for Some at High Risk of Breast Cancer](#), Get Scans Along With Mammograms, Not Instead of Them, 3/28/07