

Women's Health **UPDATE**

Better Diagnostic Tools For Women At Risk

(NAPSA)—Studies have shown that early detection of breast cancer can save lives—and a new type of MRI, designed specifically for a woman's anatomy, is able to detect the disease at a very early stage.

Breast cancer is the most frequently diagnosed cancer in women.

Earlier detection and improved treatment have resulted in decreasing death rates, but better methods of detection may improve those rates even further.

Mammography has long been the gold standard for detecting breast cancer and is widely available, but it has limitations for some women.

In 2007, the American Cancer Society (ACS) updated its guidelines for breast cancer screening, recommending an annual MRI screening in addition to mammography for women deemed as "high risk."

MRI is a noninvasive method of medical imaging that uses a magnetic field to obtain breast images, unlike mammography, which uses X-ray technology and compression of the breast.

Some studies have also suggested that frequent radiation exposure from X-rays may actually increase a woman's risk of breast disease.

Breast MRI provides 3-D pictures of both breasts, chest wall and the lymph nodes located under each arm. These high-resolution bilateral images have allowed specialists to make more accurate diagnoses and catch cancer at its earliest stage.

Several recent studies featured in highly regarded publications such as *The New England Journal of Medicine* and *The Lancet* have shown that breast MRI appears to be more sensitive than mammography. The *Lancet* study revealed that breast MRI detected 92 percent of surgically confirmed cases of ductal carcinoma in situ (DCIS), compared to a 56 percent detection rate for mammography.

New MRI imaging equipment designed specially for women may diagnose breast cancer at a far earlier stage, when it can be most successfully treated. 

An MRI system designed specifically to image breasts, such as the Aurora Breast MRI System, can actually detect cancerous growths as small as 1 mm.

Younger women and Asian women in particular often have dense breast tissue (tissue comprised of more muscle than fat), which can be difficult to image using mammography. Studies have shown that breast MRI provides better detection of cancer in dense breasts.

For women who have been diagnosed with cancer in one breast, a breast MRI system can often detect cancer in the other breast that may have been missed by mammography and clinical examination at the time of the initial diagnosis.

Talk to your doctor about breast cancer screening. For more information or to find a breast specialist near you, visit www.auroramri.com.