HealthManagement
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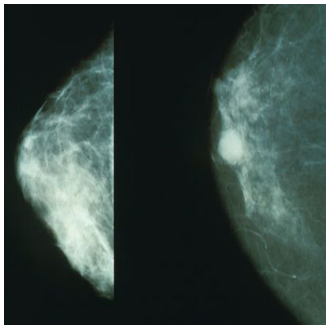
Breast Density Better Predicts Breast Cancer Risk



According to a new study from UVA Cancer Center, breast density can help better predict women's risk for breast cancer.

The study was presented during the 2014 San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium. The findings suggest that including breast density as part of risk models for breast cancer could help support the development of personalised risk models for women that could recommend how often a woman should have a mammogram based on her risk factors.

Jennifer Harvey, MD, Professor of Radiology at the UVA School of Medicine points out, "most risk models do not include breast density, which is an important indicator of a woman's breast cancer risk. Our aim was to develop a breast cancer risk model that includes a measurement of breast density with other known risk factors to improve risk prediction and give women personalised knowledge to make decisions about screening and their breast health."

The study comprised 3400 women, who had received digital mammograms at UVA, including those who had been diagnosed with breast cancer and those who had not been diagnosed, between 2003 and 2013. The study team evaluated the association between risk factors and diagnosis and calculated the breast density for each woman using an automated software program. They also obtained other relevant information from the participants through an online questionnaire.

The results of the study clearly showed that adding breast density improved the accuracy of the breast cancer risk model and proved to be one of the top five predictors of breast cancer risk in the study population. The automated measurement of breast density can help improve the recommendation for screening as per the risk profile of each patient because currently the same screening is recommended for everyone.

The findings of this study are consistent with previous studies that have also shown strong associations of volumetric density to breast cancer risk.

Source: University of Virginia Health System

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