

## **Thermography in Breast Health**

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Ladies, are you tired of having your breasts tightly squeezed and compressed while having a mammogram? Are you rightly concerned about the effects of radiation - cumulative with each dose - not to mention the effects of radiation on stressed tissue, as is the breast tissue when tightly compressed?

There is an alternative you may want to consider: breast thermography. It is a procedure that is non-invasive, non-compressive, does not use radiation, causes no harm and can pick up tissue abnormalities at a much earlier stage. It is a very useful tool in monitoring breast health and a valuable adjunct to mammography.

Here is how thermography works. Metabolic activity and vascular circulation in both pre-cancerous tissue and the area surrounding a developing breast cancer is almost always higher than in normal breast tissue. In a tumor's ever-increasing need for nutrients, they increase circulation to their cells by holding open existing blood vessels, opening dormant vessels and creating new ones. This tissue change results in an increase in surface temperatures of the breast.

Digital infrared thermography cameras can detect the heat that is given off by the breasts and display it in a picture format. These infrared scans are unique to the individual, mapping a thermal fingerprint of the breast tissue. It remains very stable over time, which makes a thermographic scan very effective as a screening tool to pick up changes that may occur.

A thermal imaging specialist can compare the heat patterns in the left breast to the right breast as well as heat pattern changes over time. Any negative change in this map over the course of months and years can signal subtle physiologic changes in the body that accompany cancer, fibrocystic disease and infection. Any suspicious breast thermal tissue changes can then be followed up with further clinical testing.

Mammography, on the other hand, looks at structure. Tumors are picked up on a mammogram when it has grown to a size that is large enough and dense enough to block an x-ray beam. It has been estimated that thermography in its sensitivity can detect tissue abnormalities and changes 8-10 years before mammography can detect a mass.

Of consideration in breast health is also estrogen dominance, specifically the estrogen levels in the breast tissues. An overexposure to estrogen is one of the greatest risk factors for breast cancer. There are thermographic markers that can suggest the effect that hormones are having in the breasts.

I often see it when women have been taking hormones, either orally or in a cream, bioidentical or synthetic, that they will have breast thermographies that show aggravation and heat in the tissues which can indicate an overload. Finding this and correcting the problem, normalizing the balance of hormones can play a significant role in breast cancer prevention.

It is imperative in the body and for greatest health that hormone levels be kept within the naturally occurring physiological range and be in proper balance within the family of hormones. If the body is overwhelmed with excess hormones, it will send the excess out into fatty tissue for storage. In women this is most often the breast tissue.

In my practice I work to balance a woman's hormone profile naturally. I work with my clients to support and nourish their endocrine organs and reduce their intake of exogenous hormones, thereby reducing the hormone load on the body. I also teach my clients eating regimes that enhance their body's clearing of hormone excesses. Follow-up thermography always shows the improvement in their breast tissues.

To get a thermography scan: Sylvia Philpy, RN, Nurse Practitioner of Integrated Health Solutions offers thermographic readings. Once limited to her office in Colorado Springs as well as traveling from time to

time to Ridgway, her services have now expanded to Durango. You can reach Sylvia and her staff at [www.integratedhealthsolutions.com](http://www.integratedhealthsolutions.com) or by phone (970) 903-0152 in Durango.

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