

## MAMMOGRAMS ARE A BUST

by Raymond Francis

Evidence continues to accumulate that mammograms cause cancer, while doing little to save lives. Unfortunately, the medical establishment, including the National Cancer Institute and the American Cancer Society, has brainwashed most of us into thinking the opposite. As a result, millions of women march off to get mammograms every year, exposing themselves to cancer-causing x-rays. The misinformation is so bad that when women were asked in a poll what they could do to prevent breast cancer, the number one response was "get a mammogram." (Exactly how mammograms are supposed to "prevent" breast cancer was not explained.) In truth, mammograms cause cancer; they are the leading cause of breast cancer. Mammograms have put a very large number of women at risk for cancer and many have died as a result.

Mammograms are routinely performed without the patient being warned of the radiation hazard. Yet Dr. John Gofman, a medical doctor, nuclear physicist, and noted radiation expert, in his 1999 book *Radiation from Medical Procedures in the Pathogenesis of Cancer and Ischemic Heart Disease*, concluded that 60 percent of all cancer and 83 percent of all breast cancer is caused by medical radiation. As early as 1974, Professor Malcolm Pike of the USC School of Medicine warned the National Cancer Institute that, "...giving a woman under age 50 a mammogram on a routine basis is close to unethical." In 1992, Dr. Samuel Epstein, professor of medicine at the University of Illinois said, "The high sensitivity of the breast...to radiation induced cancer was known by 1970." In 1995, the *Lancet* (one of the world's five leading medical journals) reported that since mammographic screening began, the incidence of one type of breast cancer (ductal carcinoma in situ) had increased by 328 percent and that the incidence in women under 40 had gone up over 3000 percent. The report's conclusion regarding mammograms was, "The benefit is marginal, the harm caused is substantial, and the costs incurred are enormous..." Similarly, Dr. Charles Simone, a former researcher at the National Cancer Institute said, "Mammograms increase the risk of developing breast cancer and raise the risk of spreading or metastasizing an existing growth."

After hearing all these negatives, is there any justification for mammograms? This question was answered in the September 2000 *Journal of the National Cancer Institute*, which reported on a study of 40,000 women between the ages 50 to 59. The mammograms found tumors that were smaller, but finding the tumor when it was smaller had no effect on the mortality rate. The study concluded that mammograms are no more effective at saving lives from breast cancer than regular breast examinations. With findings like these, on what basis can anyone recommend a mammogram to you or anyone you care about? While there are occasions when medical x-rays serve a necessary purpose, regular mammograms do not help prevent and even contribute to breast cancer.

It looks to me like mammograms are an expensive bust. In addition to causing cancer, and not saving lives, regular mammograms can also result in useless and painful breast biopsies. *Alternative Medicine*, in January 2001, pointed out that for every one case of diagnosed breast cancer, between 5 and 10 women will undergo a useless and painful biopsy. Statistically, a woman getting annual mammograms for 10 years will have a 50 percent chance of undergoing at least one biopsy. Not only do mammograms result in useless biopsies, the clinical interpretation of mammograms often misses an existing cancer. According

to a study published in the *Archives of Internal Medicine* in 1996, doctors missed finding an existing cancer 21 percent of the time.

What to do? Avoid medical radiation in all forms, including mammograms and other types of x-rays because these procedures cause cancer. Also, watch out for certain lifestyle habits. New research on breast cancer, published in *Epidemiology*, found that women who drink alcohol and do not get enough folic acid (primarily found in fresh vegetables) are 60 percent more likely to develop breast cancer. You can go a long way toward preventing breast cancer (and every other manifestation of disease) simply by eating a good diet, taking high-quality supplements, and getting plenty of exercise, sunlight, and sleep.

In my opinion, mammograms constitute a criminal assault against women. Instead, have physical breast exams by your doctor, using manual examination techniques, as well as thermography (not mammography). Thermography is a noninvasive, safe technique used for measuring differences in temperature in the breast. Not only is thermography much safer, it appears to be far more accurate than mammography. And, as always, diet is critically important in preventing breast cancer; eat plenty of fresh foods and avoid nutritionally deficient, processed foods.

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