



# Thermography Prevention is the Cure by Susan Willson, CNM, CCT

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Many women find themselves confused about the issue of breast screening these days. For decades we have been told that an annual mammogram is our best chance for early detection of breast cancer, and that we are irresponsible if we don't have one. However, the findings of the independent U.S. Preventive Services Task Force in 2009 revealed that while mammograms may detect a few more cancers, they do not change outcomes for women.

It is likely that this is because a woman's cancer will generally follow the same course it would have without that detection, either because it is actually a precancerous condition that won't evolve, it is very slow growing, or it already has metastasized by the time a mammogram picks up the primary tumor. In the meantime, thousands of women will have false positive tests, undergo invasive procedures and treatments that are unnecessary, and everyone will be exposed to radiation that is cumulative and permanently damages the DNA of the breast so that a woman's chances of developing breast cancer when she is older are increased. Those statistics do not begin to address the anxiety and physical and emotional trauma that many women go through because of false positive findings.

A good screening test will look at a broad group of normal women and highlight those who need to be followed more closely without harming them. Thermography offers us the ability to do this. Not only does thermography provide the benefit of finding abnormalities in the breast 8 to 10 years before a mammogram will show a tumor, but there is absolutely no risk involved. Unlike a mammogram, which only screens the tissue compressed between the plates, a thermography breast scan also includes the armpit area and the neck, making sure to include areas rich with lymph nodes. Including those areas is important because the highest percentage of cancers are found in the upper outer tail of the breast.

## Prevention is Key

When contemplating breast health, it is imperative to remember that

prevention is key. Lifestyle choices can make a big difference when it comes to cancer prevention and thermography screenings can be very useful in letting us know when we need to make changes. The development of breast cancer is a process that takes place over many years. If a woman has an abnormal thermogram fairly early in that process, she can then make lifestyle changes that will oftentimes arrest and even reverse early tumor formation, such as optimizing hormone balance, vitamin D levels and the ratio of good to bad estrogen in her body, adjusting sleep cycles, reducing stress and environmental toxins and making dietary changes.

Despite the impression the drug companies give us, there is no cure for breast cancer. The only 'cure' is to prevent the disease in the first place—and that is largely in our hands. It's better to focus on ways to prevent breast cancer at the cellular level, than to put the emphasis on testing and retesting until something is found to poke, prod, cut out or irradiate.

There is no 100 percent accurate test for breast cancer. In the end, we should each choose to do what makes us feel the safest and most secure. Our minds and bodies are intricately linked and if we are following someone else's prescription when it doesn't really feel right, it sets up a push-pull inside of us, which doesn't serve our health. Some women will choose never to have a mammogram. Other women, who have a higher level of concern regarding breast cancer, may choose to have both a thermogram and a mammogram every year, because an extra 10 percent of cancers can be detected with double screening. Many women will choose to have an annual thermogram, and as long as it is normal, add an ultrasound or mammogram every three to four years to get that extra 10 percent, while cutting back on their exposure to x-ray. All of these are valid choices. Whatever you choose, remember that you have the power to create breast health.

Susan Willson is a Certified Nurse Midwife and ACCT certified clinical thermographer. She has practiced women's health for 38 years and has a private practice in the Hudson Valley, offering hormone balancing and thermography. She gives workshops and lectures on breast health and women's health issues. Her office is in Stone Ridge, NY. For more information, call 845-687- 4807 or visit [Biothermallmaging.com](http://Biothermallmaging.com).