

# The Link between Early Breast Cancer Detection and Radiation Free Thermography

by Beth Meneley, L.Ac.

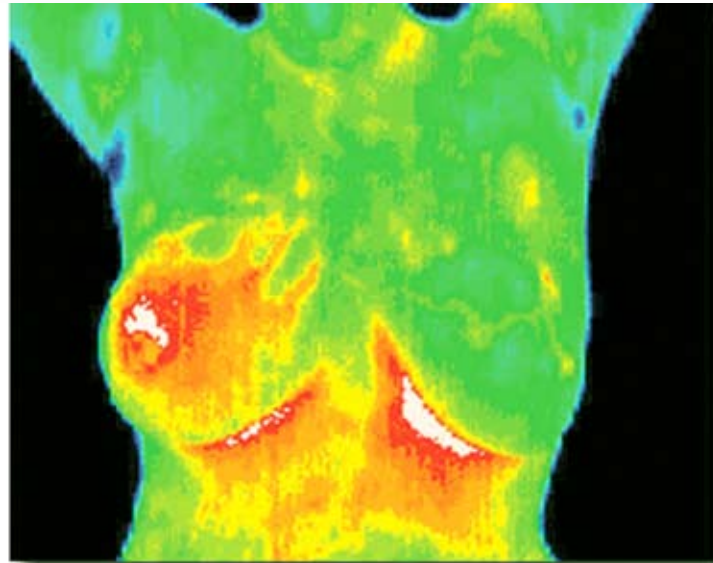
I had a wake up call early on in my life, years before I was ready to be awakened. The genetic threads of cancer weave through the fabric of, not only my DNA, but also the soulful threads that made up my hope, happiness and love; everything that laid the groundwork for whom I would one day become.

My first year as a teenager, I began the cancer journey with my father. During my last year as a teenager, the same journey with my older brother ended. From the age of thirteen to nineteen I watched my family members suffer from the lethal chains of a genetic disease that lead to cancer. The years I began to observe and understand the possibilities of the future, my mind was also blinded by the reality of short-lived lives. Hope and happiness was something I lived without for the next decade. The years I was discovering all the depths of what love was, I also discovered the power love has to overcome horrible suffering. Though I was bathed in tears of sadness, there was always a strong guiding light of love that eventually lit the path of where I would begin my own journey into healing.

Everything that would later define me as a woman was sparked by those first years when I was becoming a woman. Those first years when everything about our mind, our body, and our spirit is rapidly changing and evolving too quickly to process. When innocence of childhood is replaced overnight by the rush of hormones, crushes, fitting into social networks and talk of futures. When the reflection in the mirror becomes more serious and the questions of “who am I” and “what is my purpose” begin to arise like seedlings reaching up to the heavens.

My father passed at age 42 and my brother at 22. We lost both of them too early, mostly due to misdiagnosis of the disease. My twin sister and I then joined the family ritual of colonoscopies and other tests. The doctors lead us to believe that at any moment the disease could strike us as it had with our other young baby brother. Luckily, this was never the case.

There have been two other times in my life when I was fearful that cancer would be my destiny. During my ten years in college, I did not take the best care of myself. I worked everyday and



studied in every free moment. I thought I had time to neglect myself; I was still young enough, and soon, it would be my turn to be nourished. The neglect of my health and the emotional stress I was still holding onto without a doubt created my imbalance. I discovered that I had a hormonal condition that could lead to uterine cancer. This devastated me, but I was determined to heal myself. Luckily, I was in the beginning of acupuncture

school and determined to change those statistics.

Eventually, my hormones became balanced through acupuncture and herbs. When I became an acupuncturist, I opened a wellness center focused on women's health and cancer prevention. Every patient's powerful transition amazed me.

Then, three years ago, I believed something was terribly off in my left breast and underarm — the sensations were not right.

I considered having a mammogram, but didn't have a lump, so I knew it would be negative. My doctor also tried to talk me out of it as I was “too young” at age 34, and therefore my insurance wouldn't pay for it. I was encouraged to ignore my concerns because it would be an out-of-pocket expense. However, I was determined to find other options; I was going to be proactive.

I needed to find something that could capture what I was feeling. I eventually discovered thermography to monitor my breast health, which I was so surprised so many people, including myself, hadn't heard of. The more I learned, the more I believed in hope. A year later, I no longer felt there was an issue. Bringing awareness of breast thermography has become my new passion.

Thermography uses changes in breast tissue temperatures to identify changes in breast tissue. When pre-cancerous cells or cancerous cells form in the breast tissue, changes in blood flow and tissue concentration occur, resulting in temperature changes. The thermographic images will show the change in blood flow, tissue density as it is related to temperature, and heat distribution. Thermography breast cancer screenings are not only radiation and pain free, they can also see physiological changes happening in

breast tissue eight-plus years before those cancer cells have grown to the size that can be detected by mammography or even be felt. With early detection, you can enter a path of healing and wellness instead of sickness care. I view breast thermography as preventive medicine, because you can safely monitor your breast health, and if there is a physiological change, it is discovered at the earliest stage.

It takes years for a tumor to grow and the earliest possible indication of abnormality is needed to allow for the earliest possible treatment and intervention. The faster a malignant tumor grows, the more heat it generates, and thermography looks for these signs as well as other factors indicating a physiological red-flag for the development or existence of cancer. Thermography is designed to improve chances for detection of fast-growing active tumors in the intervals between mammography screenings or when mammography is not indicated by screening guidelines such as for younger women, denser breast tissue, breast implants and to avoid harmful radiation. It can also guide closer attention to a septic area of the breast that needs particularly close examination such as when an MRI is indicated.

Early detection will save lives. More than 90 percent of women diagnosed with early stage, localized cancer are alive five years later. Yet, according to the American Cancer Society, only 58% of cancers are diagnosed at this stage.

Most people say getting cancer gave them a wake-up call for their purpose in life. I grew up understanding the fragility of life and knowing that part of my own meaning was to give purpose to my brother and father's lives that were cut short. It is easy to look back on mistakes and supposed wrong paths taken, but I consider these detours to be like a scavenger hunt; a gathering of whatever tools I could thanks to the intuition that I would need them someday. It is so beautiful now to know that every choice I have made has purpose. The accumulation of the lessons learned brought me priceless wisdom and clarity for this new level of life I am living. My path will guide other women on their path of health and healing. I now choose to live at all depths with an elevated consciousness at the roots and branches of my being.

My wellness center is called the Tao of Venus, which means the path or way of the women. We offer the healing tools to address every aspect of the women on each path of her journey. From acupuncture to women's health massage and breast thermography, we are there to guide her journey. We always teach self-care to help empower women to leave with the tools to live their best life. We need to be guided by our doctors and their tools, but there is so much we can do for ourselves that will not only keep our bodies healthy, but also our mind and spirit; the other essential and greatest tool for fully living.

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## What is the difference between thermography and mammography?

Where mammography looks for structure such as a lump, Thermography looks for the body's physiological response to cancer cells. These changes can often occur 8-10 years before the cells are large enough to be seen by a mammogram.

## Does thermography replace mammograms?

No! However, do mammograms replace thermography? The answer to this is also a resounding no; the two tests complement one another. The consensus among health care experts is that no one procedure or method of imaging is solely adequate for breast cancer screening. The false negative and positive rates for mammography are too high for the procedure to be used alone.

Thermography can pick up many of the cancers missed by mammography. A positive infrared image is also the single most important marker of high risk for developing breast cancer. It is thermography's unique ability to monitor the abnormal temperature (physiological) changes produced by diseased breast tissue that allows for extremely early detection.

## When will I get the report back?

A week and often in just a few days.

## Is it safe if I have breast implants?

Thermography is a great screening tool for implants since it can see through the implant with no obstruction. DITI can also pick up on implant leakage due to the inflammation in the area and the resulting fibrosis. Since thermography does not touch the body there is no chance of rupture.

## I've had breast cancer; what can thermography do for me?

Thermography is a great tool to monitor your body's response to treatment. Whether you had cancer three months ago or 10 years ago, it is a great screening tool to monitor your breast health, all without any pain or radiation during your thermography screening.

## If my mammogram came back normal why should I get a breast thermogram?

A positive thermographic change is similar to finding plaque in your artery before you have a stroke or discovering you have very high cholesterol before you have a heart attack. All are warning signs that can give you an opportunity to intervene for health.

It is important to listen to the body and take the measures necessary to keep you healthy.

Remember, knowing can remove much stress.

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