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Reasons for mammographically missed and/or misinterpreted breast lesions

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Mammography is the standard screening modality that can help find breast cancer at an early stage. A mammogram can find breast changes that could be cancer years before it becomes symptomatic. A mammogram may miss some cancers and sometimes a woman needs more tests to find out if something found on a mammogram is cancer or not. False negative screening mammogram represents 10-30% of breast cancers cases. Some of the reasons for missed breast lesions are related to interpretational and observational errors. Other possible causes include dense breast parenchyma obscuring lesions, technical errors or causes related to tumor biology including the size of the tumor, growth rate associated findings and location of the lesions. Recent studies have demonstrated the use of additional or alternative modality to detect and diagnose breast lesions including Ultrasound, MRI, and 3D mammogram. However, radiologist should follow certain steps to decrease false negative mammogram and to improve errors related to interpretation and observation skills, compare current and prior mammogram to detect subtle lesions, pay attention to details and strict to the required proper patients positioning and technique of the mammogram.

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