

Oncology Nursing, Cancer Care & Radiology and Imaging

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Breast density and influencing factors

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The density of the breast has been shown to be a significant factor in the detection of breast cancer in the female breast. It can be more difficult to detect breast pathology in younger women who have a denser breast type- in comparison with an older woman with a more fatty breast. This is because as women age head towards the end of their reproductive life, there is an increase in the amount of adipose tissue and a considerable loss of lobular units. Factors such as age, pregnancy and even BMI (Body Mass Index) are thought to be some of the factors influencing breast density and subsequent diagnosis. The significance of this becomes apparent when considering that it is estimated one third of breast cancer can be explained by high breast density. The changes in breast composition can be demonstrated by the breast density in mammography, and this talk aims to show examples of problems that are associated with the dense breast.

Biography

Dawn McDonald completed her MSc in Medical Imaging, from Kingston University in 2008, and became a Consultant Mammographer soon afterwards. Working with the same autonomy and professionalism as a Consultant Breast Radiologist, she is responsible for all aspects of breast diagnosis within her unit, including breast interventional and film reading, and works closely with the surgical team. Currently, she is working at the James Paget Hospital in Great Yarmouth UK, and Imperial College London.

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