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Detection of Early Forms of Breast Cancer by Mass Screening Examinations

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Data are presented on the results of the complex prophylactic examinations of women at Prof. Petrov Research Institute of Oncology of the USSR Ministry of Health for the period of 1976—1980. Four annual prophylactic examinations (clinical method, thermography, mammography, biopsy) of 4823 women over 35 years of age revealed breast cancer in 51 persons (i. e. in 1.05% of the examined women). In 52.9% of cases tumors were revealed by clinical examination + mammography, in 29.4% by mammography alone, in 17.5% by clinical examination alone. In 38 out of 51 breast cancer patients (i.e. in 74.5% of cases) the detected tumors were less than 2 cm in diameter (stage I, "minimal" and preinvasive carcinomas).

Key words: Breast cancer, early diagnostics.

Breast cancer is becoming one of the main tumor sites in women and steady rise of breast cancer morbidity is being observed in most countries [6].

In spite of accessibility of the breast for visual examination and palpation late diagnoses of breast tumors often take place. Only 10—15% of breast cancer patients sent to special stationaries have breast cancer stage I [1, 2]. The rest have more disseminated tumors and in half of cases the process of tumor spread leads to appearance of distant metastases [1].

It is of no doubt, that since treatment results are determined mainly by the degree of local and regional spread of the tumor process, the progress in breast cancer treatment can be achieved first of all on the basis of its timely diagnosis. Therefore, the main objective in breast cancer control is in addition to the search of effective ways of prevention, an early (timely) diagnosis of breast cancer.

The article presents data on the results of 4 annual prophylactic examinations of women at the Prof. N. N. Petrov Research Institute of Oncology of the USSR Ministry of Health for the period 1976—1980.

Materials and Methods

The following diagnostic methods were used: 1. Clinical examination (including family history, a special questionnaire on presence or absence of "risk factors",