

Thermography. Proc. 1st Europ. Congr., Amsterdam 1974
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Prognosis and Post-Therapeutic Follow-up of Breast Cancers by Thermography

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The majority of publications regarding thermography of breast cancer deals with either primary diagnosis or mass-screening. Heat generated by a developing breast cancer may be diagnosed by its skin manifestations. Thus, thermography can be used to predict and follow the development or disappearance of breast cancers. Although this idea is not new [4, 6], certainly no in-depth study has been performed.

The fact that we are one of the few clinics to utilize radiation as a primary method of treating breast cancer patients made it possible for us to carry out subsequent investigations. We insisted on the following difficult criteria, otherwise we felt that many of our results would not be significant: (1) a large number of cases and continuing surveillance, (2) an adequate number of patients treated exclusively by irradiation with regular re-examination and re-evaluation for a minimum period of 3 years. This has enabled us to report on the value of thermography not only as a prognostic index but as a means of changing the treatment program and, thus, influencing the survival rate. Prognosis by definition predicts survival and the quality of survival regardless of treatment plan (local excision, mastectomy or irradiation). Prognosis starts at the time of initial diagnosis and should determine the choice of treatment which will result in maximal survival.

Thermography adds a new dimension to evaluation of a post-therapeutic decision. If the patient has undergone surgery (simple or radical), then we are concerned primarily with the remaining breast, the scar and the clinical status. For patients who have undergone irradiation only, we feel that

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