Recent Findings on Mammography Screening – Scientific Appraisal

The criticisms directed against mammography screening in recent months have greatly unsettled the potential participants in screening programs. Supposedly, mammography screening would not achieve the reduction in mortality rates expected by seven randomized studies carried out more than 20 years ago. The execution of the studies and their evaluation would have been partially flawed. One of these studies, the randomized Canadian study (CNBSS) which found no reduction in breast cancer mortality rates, was cited as evidence for this. Moreover, it was posited that the improved prognosis resulting from the current use of adjuvant medication meant that early detection using mammography was unlikely to lead to significant decreases in breast cancer mortality.

However, an analysis of the Canadian mammography screening program published a few weeks ago [1], a program which was introduced despite the negative findings of the above-mentioned CNBSS study, underscores the continued efficacy of mammography screening even in current times. A reduction of breast cancer mortality rates by 40% was reported for women who had undergone mammography screening between 1990 and 2009. These new findings from Canada confirm the assessment that early detection through screening can lead to a significant reduction in breast cancer mortality.

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References