

Ultrasound Boosts Breast Cancer Detection

The results of a study published in *The Journal of the American Medical Association*, May 14, 2008, found that mammography alone had a cancer detection rate of 7.6 per 1,000 women screened. Adding an additional ultrasound boosted the rate to 11.8 per 1,000 women screened – an increase of 28 percent.

Dr. Wendie Berg, the study's lead investigator, was interested in finding out whether ultrasound could pick up tumors that mammography could not, something earlier studies had suggested. "Ultrasound is a completely different way of looking at the breast tissue that is not at all limited by how *dense* the breast tissue is," Berg says. "The types of cancer that we see with ultrasound are still small but they are invasive cancer – they're the type that spread when not detected," she explains. "And in this study we found that the vast majority of cancers we found with ultrasound had not yet spread to lymph nodes. And that's important. Those are the types of cancers that we need to be finding." *From: NPR – All Things Considered by Patti Neighmond*