

CAD assists in breast cancer detection

“At Westcoast Diagnostic Imaging Centers, we strive to offer patients the most advanced imaging modalities available,” says medical director and board-certified ra-



HARLAN G. HERR, MD

diologist Harlan G. Herr, MD. “We were the first to bring to Citrus and Levy counties a powerful new diagnostic imaging tool that can alert reading radiologists to structures in breast tissue that may pose a heightened risk for breast cancer.”

The technology is CAD, or computer-assisted detection, and the R2 ImageChecker CAD system used by Westcoast Diagnostic Imaging was the first to receive approval from the FDA for screening mammography in 1998.

CAD basics

To take advantage of R2 ImageChecker CAD technology, an image of a mammogram, whether in digital or screen/film format, is scanned into a computer. The computer analyzes the image and compares it to a data-

base that holds thousands of image pattern abnormalities known to be cancers, including subtle soft-tissue masses or groupings of microcalcifications. It alerts the reading radiologist when the mammogram contains any of these pattern abnormalities.

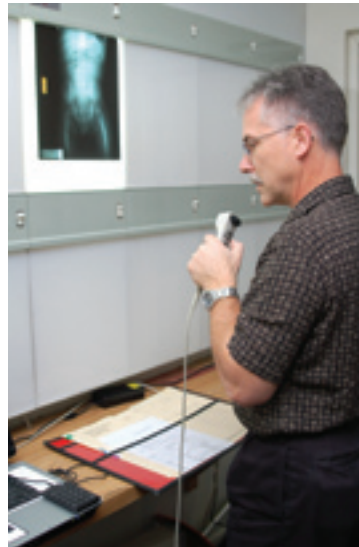
Once the computer identifies a suspicious area, the radiologist reevaluates it. Most often this second look will not change the radiologist’s assessment, but occasionally CAD helps identify an early-stage cancer that would have been missed until it grew larger.

“When considering the number of mammograms performed each year,” observes Dr. Herr, “enough additional early-stage cancers can be diagnosed sooner by CAD with the R2 ImageChecker to make this tool a valuable addition to an imaging center’s diagnostic armamentarium.”

Advanced technologies

“Westcoast Diagnostic Imaging is committed to providing our communities with leading-edge technologies and the highest standards of patient care,” emphasizes Dr. Herr. “Our practice has often been the first to introduce new modalities in our communities, resulting in earlier diagnoses and improved results for our patients.”

In addition to R2 CAD Mammography, Westcoast Diagnostic Imaging offers traditional x-ray and ultrasound studies, echocardiography, spiral



FHCN PHOTO BY NERISSA JOHNSON

CT scan, short bore MRI, and DEXA scan bone densitometry.

Alone in Citrus County, Westcoast Diagnostic Imaging offers the hologic instant vertebral assessment system, which can identify spine fractures with one rapid, low-dose, single-energy image at double the resolution of previously available techniques.

“People who live far from large research centers often have to travel a significant distance to receive diagnostic services like

this,” points out Dr. Herr, “but we bring these advanced technologies home to our patients, sparing them the inconvenience and stress of a lengthy trip to a traffic-congested city.”

The friendly and professional staff at Westcoast Diagnostic Imaging ensures patients of the highest levels of satisfaction and comfort and schedules patients in a timely manner.

“If we say early detection is important, then it makes no sense to have patients wait two or three months for a diagnostic imaging test,” Dr. Herr states. “And once the test is complete, referring physicians should not encounter long delays in receiving our reports.”

Modern voice recognition software is used to help radiologists generate their reports to referring physicians within 24

hours following tests, and Dr. Herr notes that in many cases the reports are ready before the patient leaves the imaging center.

“In every aspect of our practice,” says Dr. Herr, “our goal is to provide the best possible quality of care to our patients and the quickest and most thorough reports to their referring physicians.” **FHCN**—Billie S. Noakes

WESTCOAST DIAGNOSTIC IMAGING CENTERS, INC.

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Harlan G. Herr, MD, is board certified by the American Board of Radiology and is licensed in Florida, Arkansas, and Alabama. He completed his undergraduate studies at State College of Arkansas, Conway, and earned his medical degree at the University of Arkansas School of Medicine, Little Rock. Dr. Herr served his rotating internship and a urology residency at the Naval Hospital, Portsmouth, VA, and a diagnostic radiology residency at Bethesda Naval Hospital, MD. Dr. Herr is a member of the American Medical Association, American College of Radiology, Radiological Society of North America, American Roentgen Ray Society, and Society of Nuclear Medicine.

ON THE WEB! Please visit Westcoast Diagnostic Imaging Centers at westcoastdiagnostic.com.