



PIPER BREAST CENTER *Communiqué*

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BONE MINERAL DENSITY USED IN THE FIGHT AGAINST OSTEOPOROSIS

Technology now available at Piper Breast Center

~ By Deborah L. Day, MD

It's a disease that is a major public health issue, affecting 25 million Americans and costing \$14 billion dollars annually. The disease is not breast cancer or heart disease; it is osteoporosis.

Osteoporosis is a disorder in which bone and cartilage become brittle and weak. A progressive disease, osteoporosis can be a factor in fractures in elderly people, especially of the spine, hips and wrists. These bone fractures can adversely affect daily activities and may lead to chronic pain and many other problems. Later stage osteoporosis can lead to permanent immobility, loss of independence and even death.

The good news is that osteoporosis can be prevented and treated. And with the recent addition of bone mineral density technology at Piper Breast Center, the goal is to diagnose osteoporosis before a fracture occurs.

Women commonly evaluated to detect osteoporosis are those contemplating hormone replacement therapy and those before, during or after the time of menopause. Routine bone X-rays can seem to detect osteoporosis, however, definitive diagnosis is made with bone mineral density measurements, the technology recently added to Piper Breast Center.

During a single visit to Piper Breast Center, patients can have breast cancer screening with a mammogram and osteoporosis screening with bone mineral density measurements. The bone mineral density testing equipment is in a private, comfortable room. Testing is available for both male and female patients of Abbott Northwestern. Follow-up bone mineral measurements can also be performed at Piper Breast Center.

We hope you take advantage of this opportunity for your overall health and wellness.

Did You Know ...

~ By Carol Bergen, RN

The term dense breast tissue refers to how tissue appears on a mammogram. Glandular (milk producing) tissue and connective breast tissue are dense and typically found in younger women, while fat tissue is less dense and usually increases with age.

Dense breast tissue appears quite white on a mammogram film, making abnormalities difficult to distinguish. The image of a breast with more fat content shows more distinct contrast.

Piper Breast Center is online at www.abbottnorthwestern.com, under Services & Programs. Go to our site to see information on our programs, services and staff.



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A LOOK INTO PLASTIC SURGERY Breast Procedures not Related to Cancer Reconstruction

~ By David F. Ruebeck, MD

In addition to breast reconstruction surgery following breast cancer, a plastic surgeon performs many breast procedures to enhance the size and shape of a woman's breast, including breast augmentation, breast reduction and breast lifts.

Breast augmentation is one of the best known of these surgeries. Augmentation can help correct disproportionately small breasts or post-pregnancy related changes in breast size and shape. Currently, only saline filled implants can be used for first-time augmentation. Silicone gel implants can be used to correct certain problems with previous augmentations, but only if the patient enrolls in a data collection study required by the Federal Drug Administration (FDA).

Breast reduction is also quite common. This surgery offers relief to women with large breasts and secondary neck, back and shoulder pain. Other symptoms of

large breasts, or macromastia, include bra strap grooves, rashes under the breasts, and even numbness in the fingers due to nerve compression. Health insurance frequently covers breast reduction, if a certain height and weight criteria are met.

A procedure called mastopexy lifts the breast for changes that occur after pregnancy and with aging. Depending on the amount of lift required, many different techniques may be used for mastopexy. For example, the plastic surgeon may combine breast augmentation with this procedure to improve both shape and size.

In a minor procedure performed under local anesthetic, inverted nipples can be corrected as well. In this procedure, the plastic surgeon releases the contracted milk ducts to allow nipple correction. But it is important to note that the procedure does not guarantee breast-feeding function.

DOES ORAL CONTRACEPTIVE USE INCREASE BREAST CANCER RISK?

~ By Penny A. Wheeler, MD

Women understand well that life is a series of trade-offs, but are we trading the convenience and benefits of birth control pills for an increased likelihood of breast cancer? While the answer to this question is still unfolding, much has been clarified about the relationship between breast cancer and oral contraceptives.

Numerous studies have addressed the risk of breast cancer in relation to contraceptive use. Recently, a broad group of investigators, collaborating from all over the world, reanalyzed data from 43 studies in 26 different countries. More than 53,000 women with breast cancer and more than 100,000 without breast cancer were studied. Overall, the findings were encouraging. No increased risk of breast cancer was found in those with past oral contraceptive use (10 or more years since pill discontinuation), no matter how long they used the pill. Women with a higher risk of developing breast cancer – with a family history of breast cancer or personal history of benign breast disease (fibroadenoma or epithelial hyperplasia) – had no increase in breast cancer if they had used the pill.

While these findings are reassuring to many oral contraceptive users concerned about breast cancer, the effect in young women remains controversial. The studies have shown a slight increased risk of breast cancer in current users of the pill and recent users (within the past one to four years) who began use before their 20th birthday. This increased risk is unexplained; it is suggested that the increased cancer risk in young women on the pill may be due to detection bias, since women using the pill visit health care providers more often. Fortunately, the risk of breast cancer in women under the age of 40 has declined since 1985.

Further studies and time will clarify the risk of breast cancer in oral contraceptive users, but overall, the evidence reassuringly suggests that birth control pills do not cause breast cancer.

TWIN CITIES RACE FOR THE CURE RAISED \$2 MILLION



Photo courtesy of Twin Cities Race for the Cure

Nearly 47,000 people participated in the 10th Annual Twin Cities Race for the Cure, which raised a record \$2 million for local cancer support services and national research efforts. The yearly race on Mother's Day is largely volunteer-driven and aims to increase awareness of breast cancer and raise funds for programs including the Piper Breast Center.

Communiqué is produced for friends of Abbott Northwestern's Piper Breast Center, 800 East 28th Street, Minneapolis, MN 55407-3799, 612-863-3150.

Medical editor ~ Beverly Trombley, MD