

EUSOBI recommends MRI screening in women with extremely dense breasts

Vienna, Austria – March 8, 2022 - The European Society of Breast Imaging released its new recommendations for screening of women with extremely dense breasts today. In this recommendation EUSOBI steps away from the one-size-fits all approach of biennial mammography that is currently adopted by most European screening organizations and advocates for tailored screening programs that take the characteristics and personal wishes of individual women into account.

Women with extremely dense breast tissue have about two times more chance to develop breast cancer than the average woman. Simultaneously, the sensitivity of mammography is reduced because cancers are being masked by overprojecting fibroglandular breast tissue. After careful consideration of the evidence, particularly the results of the Dutch DENSE trial, EUSOBI now recommends that women with extremely dense breast tissue are offered screening with breast MRI. In these women, breast MRI can reduce the mortality from breast cancer and is highly cost-effective.

“We have known for a long time that the performance of mammography screening in women with extremely dense breasts is not very good” says Fiona Gilbert, current president of EUSOBI. “However, we had nothing better to offer. The recent MRI screening trials have largely changed this.”

The new recommendation has far-reaching consequences for all women, as it implies that they should be informed of their breast density when screened. EUSOBI calls on all screening organizations to provide women with this information. The recommendation also acknowledges that there are clear downsides of screening for breast cancer, and calls on breast radiologists to inform women appropriately.

“Women should have a say in if and how they want to be screened. This implies on one hand that we must offer women all methods - including breast MRI - that are proven effective, while on the other hand we should never hold it against them when they opt for less effective methods or even no screening at all” says Ritse Mann, chair of EUSOBI’s scientific committee and first author of the new recommendation.

EUSOBI acknowledges that it may take time before the new recommendations are implemented, and that the level of implementation is dependent on the resources that are available locally. A webinar for further explanation and discussion of the recommendation is planned. EUSOBI is always willing to advice on local implementation of its recommendations.

The full recommendation can be found here: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00330-022-08617-6>

About EUSOBI:

EUSOBI is Europe's prime association of breast imaging specialists. EUSOBI is a daughter society of the European Society of Radiology (ESR). The core members of EUSOBI are dedicated breast radiologists who are best positioned to bring together the clinical and theoretical realities of breast imaging. Other scientists are welcome as associate members. EUSOBI thus brings together extensive expertise on imaging based breast care, ranging from screening applications to image guided treatment and follow-up.

For further information, please contact: office@eusobi.org