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MAMMOGRAPHY AND BREAST CANCER: ANALYSIS OF A PROVEN SCREENING METHOD

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Objectives: To analyze the effectiveness of mammography in breast cancer screening. **Methodology:** The study consists in a literature review, realized between September of 2018 and January of 2019, through a research of scientific articles and editorials in the SciELO and Bireme databases, from Medline and Lilacs. **Results:** There are several established methods playing a central role in the diagnosis and management of breast diseases. Mammography continues being the most representative technique used for breast cancer screening. However, there is still a large discussion about the indications for this screening, leading to no consensus in the scientific society. In 2015, the Swiss Medical Council started not recommending mammography as a screening method, claiming that the benefits did not outweigh the risks for women in general, as 22% of women were subject to false positive results and women with BRCA mutation, vulnerable to radiation, increased their chances of developing the disease. According to Cochrane, there is no evidence that the regular realization of mammograms contributes to reduce the risk of death from breast diseases in women of any age. As the attributions to the cause of death are lacking in the populations surveyed, it is impossible to correlate with the increased risk of general mortality. In addition, it was evidenced that women have been exposed to 30% more improperly mastectomies, being submitted to overdiagnosis, when the article states that one in 424 women was victim of inadequate procedures. **Conclusion:** The current discordant findings will not cause an immediately change in the use of mammography as a preventive method, since there is the need for more embracing international studies that will determine the precise relation between the use of regular mammography and the reduction of the associated mortality risk.