

DEBORAH

It is estimated that approximately one in four women will acquire breast cancer in the next 10 to 15 years. Today one in seven acquire breast cancer. The importance of early detection cannot be overemphasized because the earlier that we can detect breast cancer, the higher the cure rates.

KERLIN:

Up until the 70s, if you had had mass in your breast you were sent to a surgeon, and the surgeon took you to surgery, and biopsied that mass. If it came back cancer while you were in surgery the surgeon then did a mastectomy. Today that doesn't happen. Today we have screening modalities that we can do the diagnosis of breast cancer without ever having to go to surgery. And those screening tools include digital mammography with computer assisted detection, mammography using the latest technology of tomosynthesis, which is a three dimensional, or panoramic view of a woman's breast, mammogram ultrasound, and breast MRI.

Breast MRI is particularly useful in patients who have a very high risk of getting breast cancer. That being patients with very strong family history of breast cancer, or who carry a genetic mutation that increases their risk of breast cancer occurrence. We are so fortunate at John Muir Health to have available all of these modalities for screening, because earlier detection improves earlier cure rates, and overall survival for our patients.