

3Breast Cancer Screening : philosophy and results »

Les concepts du dépistage de masse : les résultats.

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Mass screening is a public health policy (secondary prevention). Its goal is to diagnose diseases precociously in order to decrease the mortality due to this disease.

This action of public health has to be differentiated from the individual search of early diagnosis (called individual screening error) which focuses another population and uses other diagnosis methods. The two approaches are complementary, either from the start or during the procedure of mass screening.

In this talk, we will present

- The inclusion criteria in a mass screening campaign
- The experimentation which justifies this screening
- The essential points differentiating mass screening from individual screening
- The consequences of both methods in term of results.

We will discuss the advantages and disadvantages of mass screening, of the early diagnosis, and we will show how these actions are linked to the health system characteristics.

We will also discuss the polemic concerning this concept. All these concepts will be arguments from the breast cancer mass screening example.