

2. Mirzaei S, Knoll P, Bastati B, Mirna A, Salzer H, Köhn H. Improved negative predictive value of mammoscintigraphy in patients with breast cancer by means of a "MALIGNANCY INDEX." In: Bergmann H, Köhn H, Sinzinger H, eds. *Radioactive Isotopes in Medicine and Research: XXIII*. Basel, Switzerland: Birkhäuser Verlag; 1999:455-458.
3. Khalkhali I, Mena I, Jouanne E, et al. Prone scintimammography in patients with suspicion of carcinoma of the breast. *J Am Coll Surg*. 1994;178:491-497.
4. Pollei SR, Mettler FA, Barstow SA, Moradian G, Moskowita M. Occult breast cancer: prevalence and radiographic detectability. *Radiology*. 1987;163:459-462.
5. Jacob D, Brombart J, Muller C, et al. Analysis of the results of 137 subclinical breast lesions: value of ultrasonography in the early diagnosis of breast cancer. *J Gynecol Obstet Biol Reprod*. 1997;26:27-31.

**Siroos Mirzaei
Peter Knoll
Rainer Walter Lipp
Horst Köhn**

*Ludwig Boltzmann Institute of Nuclear Medicine
Wilhelminenspital
Vienna, Austria*

REPLY: We have read with much attention the letter by Mirzaei et al. referring to our article "Mammography and ^{99m}Tc-MIBI scintimammography in suspected breast cancer" (1). We agree with their comments and believe that the "mamma malignancy index" they describe can be a useful tool in reducing the number of breast biopsies performed in benign lesions. In addition, it would be of interest to learn whether they have found any variation in their

results depending on the lesion size. We encourage the authors to publish the results obtained using this new index.

Our group, in the same manner as that of Mirzaei et al., is evaluating the usefulness of scintimammography in the assessment of dense breasts. In a group of 47 patients with dense breasts, we have not found any significant differences in the scintimammography results that are dependent on the density of the breast tissue (sensitivity, 92%; specificity, 80%) (2).

In conclusion, we believe that scintimammography, mammosonography, and the combined use of both techniques can increase the positive predictive value of mammography and assist in the evaluation of those mammographies that are difficult to assess, such as in the case of patients with dense breast tissue.

REFERENCES

1. Prats E, Aisa F, Abós MD, et al. Mammography and ^{99m}Tc-MIBI scintimammography in suspected breast cancer. *J Nucl Med*. 1999;40:296-301.
2. Prats E, Razola P, Sainz JM, et al. Valoración del tejido mamario denso mediante gammagrafía de mama con MIBI-^{99m}Tc [abstract]. *Rev Esp Med Nucl*. 1999;18:236.

**Enrique Prats
Maria Dolores Abós
Fausto García
Javier Banzo**
*University Teaching Hospital
Zaragoza, Spain*