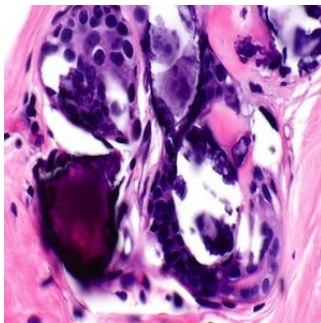

Study Links BACs to Increased Risk of Coronary Artery Disease and Stroke



The findings of a 10-year follow-up study have now shown that the long viewed as benign breast arterial calcifications (BACs) detected on routine mammograms are associated with an increased risk of coronary heart disease and stroke. The study will be presented at the 2016 Annual Meeting of The North American Menopause Society (NAMS) in Orlando (October 5-8). This finding could offer a major advantage in women's healthcare without additional costs.

Previous research has established a strong link between calcifications of the intimal layer of breast arteries and cardiovascular disease-related morbidity and mortality. However, breast calcifications of the medial layer of breast arteries, i.e. BACs, are not well studied, have been inconsistently reported on mammography, and are generally perceived as benign. Research from the Reading Hospital in Pennsylvania shows that BACs are associated with an increased risk of coronary artery disease and stroke.

The aim of the study was to assess whether the presence of BACs on routine mammograms is an early marker for predicting the development of cardiovascular disease in women who did not present symptoms at the time they had the mammogram. It thus involved 10 years of follow up of 1,029 women who had BACs but did not show any signs of cardiovascular disease at the time of recruitment.

After controlling for age, the researchers found that women with BACs were 2.3 times more likely to have coronary artery disease and 3.2 times more likely to have a stroke. These findings elucidate the potential long-term health implications of BACs and emphasise the need for further large population-based research to confirm BACs as early predictors of future development of cardiovascular disease.

This additional benefit of a routinely performed screening test for breast cancer could improve the chances of women at risk of cardiovascular disease of living longer without increasing the financial burden.

Source: [The North American Menopause Society](#)

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