

# Healthworks

## NUTRITION CENTRE

### **Frequently Asked Questions about Thermography:**

What is breast thermography?

Breast thermography uses infrared imaging. It is non-invasive, radiation-free and a completely safe method that complements all other types of breast testing modalities. Breast thermography evaluates physiology, i.e., how the breast tissue functions as opposed to mammography and ultrasounds, which image the structure or anatomy of the breast. It is well documented in medicine that changes in physiology can occur 8 to 10 years before anatomic changes. Breast thermography identifies that physiological change right from the onset. This means that women can initiate a proactive plan leading to breast cancer prevention.

How does it work?

Thermography is based on the scientific principle that chemical and blood vessel activity in both pre-cancerous tissue and the area surrounding a developing breast cancer is almost always higher than in the normal breast. Since pre-cancerous and cancerous masses are highly metabolic tissues, they need an abundant supply of nutrients to maintain their growth. To do this, they increase circulation to their cells by sending out chemicals to keep existing blood vessels open, recruit dormant vessels, and create new ones (neo angiogenesis). This process results in an increase in regional surface temperatures of the breast.

Who is thermography useful for?

Thermography can provide all women of all ages with a risk assessment of their breast health: younger women who are before the recommended age for mammography, women with dense breast tissue, with fibrocystic breast condition, women who have had inconclusive mammograms, and women with implants.

What do I do with the results of the test?

Once the risk level is assessed with breast thermography you can consult with live cell analysis to develop strategies of lowering these factors before cancer has a chance to develop. You can also monitor your treatment progress with breast thermography and see if things are going in the right direction or if you need to make some adjustments to your therapy.

Why have more than one thermography exam?

Regular breast thermography examinations after a baseline is established can be a reference point for monitoring breast health over a long period of time. It can show stability and improvement, or deviation from the baseline can point to increased risk. Having a heads up gives you an opportunity to resolve the issue at hand before any serious problems develop.