
EDITORIAL

Expensive and Expansive: Cardiovascular Magnetic Resonance Imaging and Screening Mammography

This issue of the *Journal of the Hong Kong College of Radiologists* presents 2 review articles by 2 Dr. Lams featuring 2 important areas in diagnostic radiology: cardiovascular magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and screening mammography.

Cardiovascular MRI has made such advancements during the past decade that there is a journal dedicated to this field: the *Journal of Cardiovascular Magnetic Resonance*. While this MRI technique allows comprehensive cardiac evaluation — including the assessment of cardiac and coronary morphological anatomy, ventricular function, flow, 2- and 3-dimensional wall motion and contractility, and energy metabolism — the most prevailing clinical application in ischaemic heart disease has been the assessment of myocardial perfusion reserve¹ and viability². In this issue, Dr. WWM Lam³ has provided a concise and practical review on the diagnosis of ischaemic heart disease with cardiovascular MRI. Despite being an expensive procedure, the technique has become a useful and well-accepted method of diagnosing and monitoring this important disease entity.

Breast cancer is also an important health issue worldwide. Unlike cardiovascular MRI, screening mammography for breast cancer does not require expensive cutting-edge techniques. Dr. HS Lam⁴ has provided a comprehensive review and discussion of the advantages and limitations of mammographic screening. However, when it comes to reviewing the status and usefulness of mammographic screening in the Asian population,

a major limitation is the rarity and relatively short-term nature of published studies conducted on this subject in Asia.^{5,6} The smaller breast volume, the relatively denser breast parenchyma, and the relatively lower prevalence of breast cancer among Asian women compared with western women may all affect the validity of breast cancer screening programmes in Asian populations.⁶ Guidance for radiologists in Asia is needed but would rely on long-term results of large population-based investigations of breast screening in the region.

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