

Diet High in Animal Fats Could Put Menopausal Women 'at Greater Risk of Breast Cancer'

A new [study](#) published in the journal *Radiology* suggests menopausal women should avoid a diet high in animal fats because these can accumulate in the breast and heighten their risk of cancer. The researchers developed a magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) method called gradient-echo spectroscopic imaging that estimates fractions of different types of fat in breast adipose tissue as a part of clinical breast MRI exam. Included in the study were 89 patients whose height, weight, and body-mass index (BMI) was measured. Fifty-eight patients were premenopausal and 31 postmenopausal. Using medical records, 49 were diagnosed with benign breast tissue, 12 had ductal carcinoma in situ, and 28 had invasive ductal carcinoma. A greater proportion of saturated fatty acids and a lower proportion of monounsaturated fatty acids were found in the breast tissue of postmenopausal women with invasive ductal carcinoma than in postmenopausal women with benign breast tissue. Among the women with benign lesions, postmenopausal women had much higher polyunsaturated fatty acids and lower saturated fatty acids in their breasts than premenopausal women. There was no observed correlation between BMI and fatty acid fractions in breast tissue, suggesting the type of fat that composes fatty breast tissue gives new information beyond the amount of overall body fat.