

Digital mammograms are the best bet for most women, and those with a very high risk of breast cancer are also urged to get an MRI - and imaging test that highlights suspicious patterns of blood flow. But a new test, called MBI (molecular breast imaging), may soon take MRI's place, perhaps within the next three to five years, says Kristi Funk, MD, chief of breast surgery at Pink Lotus Breast Center in Beverly Hills and former director of the breast center at Cedars-Sinai medical Center. During the MBI test, the patient is injected with a sugar solution that circulates in the blood; after an hour, abnormal cells collect sugar faster than healthy cells. Both MBIs and MRIs can detect very small tumors, but MBIs may be less likely to produce false positives. Once the technology becomes mainstream, MBIs should also be cheaper.