

# ABSTRACT

The Role of the Cytology Laboratory  
in the diagnosis and screening of breast cancer.

Claudette Miriam Brown

The use of fine needle aspiration cytology as a diagnostic and screening tool was examined. Cytology reports for five hundred and forty-five aspirates for the period 1993-1995 were used and findings reported as (1) malignant 97; (2) suspicious 27; (3) atypical 37; (4) benign 229; and (5) unsatisfactory 155. Histology results were obtained for 208 of the 545 cases (38.2%) and confirmed carcinoma in 92/97 malignant, 25/27 suspicious and 14/37 atypical cases. Biopsy of 73/229 benign lesions showed carcinoma in 4. There were no false positive cases. Statistical analysis showed a sensitivity rate of 87% and a positive predictive value of 100%.

In response to questionnaires submitted to consultants and residents in the Department of surgery 15 replies were received. The analysis of responses revealed scores of above 67% (13/15) for knowledge questions. The majority used FNA technique more than half of the time in the management of patients with palpable lesions.

There was general acceptance of FNAC by both doctors and patients. Thirty-two patients responded to questionnaires issued. The majority of patients showed good tolerance of the technique and the analysis revealed a good understanding of the role of the FNAC procedure.