

Thermography vs. Thermometry – Knowing the Difference Can Save Your Life

Getting to the cause of a health problem is the only way to insure that the treatment you receive will be effective. Many patients have ongoing conditions due to treatments that are not directed at the cause of the problem. With the use of **thermography** many patients have realized this fact and have finally found relief. And when it comes to a woman's breast health, early detection is the key to better treatment options.

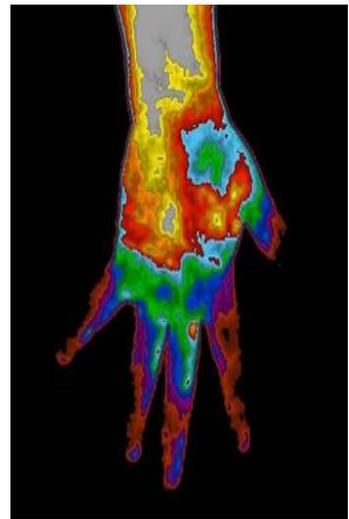
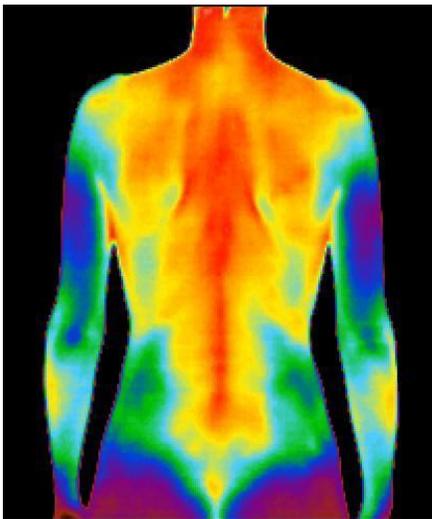
Thermography offers women an adjunctive risk assessment that plays a significant role in early detection. Seems simple enough – right? A professional has suggested **thermography** to you, so you do what the majority of people do – research it on the internet and find the place closest to you.

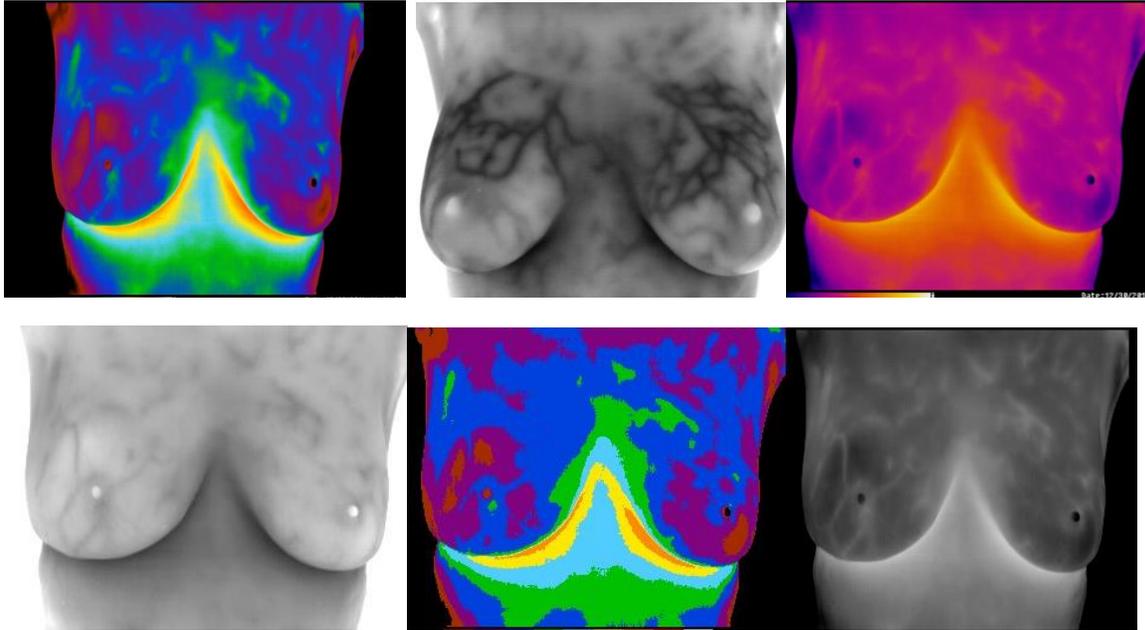
But wait! Are you certain that the procedure you are being given is a thermogram? Unfortunately, there are providers who tout this service but *provide something different!* They subject you to thermometry, telling you it's basically the same. Don't be fooled. Arm yourself with the best information by understanding the difference. Let us help...

Important Definitions – Thermography vs. Thermometry

Let's first understand exactly what these technologies are:

Are you getting these images?





Thermography – the current thermography systems used by health care professionals is known as Medical Infrared Imaging. Using high-end infrared camera equipment and sophisticated computerized processing, the system provides a high-resolution image showing a highly detailed thermovascular map of the surface of the body. Dysfunctions within the tissue may be revealed through vascular changes and thermal patterns. Women who are pregnant, nursing, have implants, large or dense breasts, or fibrocystic breasts can safely undergo this type of imaging. There is no radiation, no contact with the body, no injections and its pain free.

Thermometry – simply put, this is the measurement of temperature. Thermometry can come in many different forms such as using a thermometer to take your core temperature or making sure your food is cooked correctly. Another type of thermometry we have seen uses hand-held probes to measure your skin's temperature. The most common temperature sensors used are thermocouple or infrared.

Now, it's important to understand the difference and why thermography/Medical Infrared Imaging going to provide **better information**:

Information / Outcome	Thermography	Thermometry
Detects thermal signs of blood vessel pattern changes that can assist in evaluating risk?	✓	
Risk assessment as an early warning?	✓	
High resolution images?	✓	
Heat map showing thermal patterns?	✓	
Skin temperature only?		✓
Prone to false readings due to temperature changes caused by improper patient pre-exam preparation, room environment, probe surface contact, etc?		✓
Images analyzed and interpreted by doctors who are board certified clinical thermologists?	✓	
Breast images TH graded under the internationally accepted IACT and AAT standards and guidelines?	✓	

Questions to Ask About Thermography

Since there are service providers who will use these terms interchangeably, it is prudent to **ask the following questions** so you know exactly what you are receiving:

1. Will you be taking high-resolution images?
2. What information will be provided?
3. Will the process entail taking my skin temperature only?
4. Will anything touch my body; thus changing the real temperature of the skin?
5. Will my images be stored for future reference and comparison?
6. Is this procedure approved by the International Academy of Clinical Thermology or the American Academy of Thermology?
7. Will your thermogram be read by a doctor who is board certified as a clinical thermologist?
8. In the event that your breasts are imaged, will your reports come back with each breast graded on the internationally standardized TH 1-5 scale?
9. Who will perform the procedure? Is the technician certified by a recognized association?

Thermography gives you valuable information that no other imaging method can provide. Don't be shy! Ask questions so you can be sure you are receiving the assessment you are looking for.