

By Melody Lesser

BODY & SOUL

What Really Lies Beneath: The Inside Story on Preventative Imaging

BEN IS A 38 YEAR-OLD MAN. HE IS HAPPILY married with two children. His job, while demanding, provides rich monetary and emotional rewards, and allows for four weeks off per year. He's been a member of the same gym for five years and devotes Saturday mornings to playing racquetball. Ben watches his diet and his weight. Yet, Ben believes that he is a potential time bomb waiting to go off. His father dropped dead of a massive heart attack at the age Ben is now.

Aside from minor illnesses like colds and the occasional stomach flu, Sarah has never been sick a day in her life. Perhaps in part because of her clean medical history, Sarah has a habit of abusing her health. A pack-a-day smoker since age 16, Sarah is also a yo-yo dieter and has been gaining and losing the same 20 pounds since she was a teenager. She has never seen the inside of a gym, but claims she gets enough exercise from walking her two dogs. Sarah is 41 years old, married, and has a child who just started college. Several years ago she rekindled her passion for painting. A local gallery will be mounting her first show in a couple of months and Sarah is both ecstatic and nervous. She is up to two packs of cigarettes a day but swears she'll quit as soon as the exhibit is over.

Jack is an executive with a Fortune 100 company. Every weekday for the past 15 years, he's left his house at 5:45 a.m. in order to catch a train to work. He devotes his commuting time to working on his laptop. His workdays are spent meeting clients, overseeing his staff of 45, dictating proposals and troubleshooting. Lunch is either forgotten or eaten while taking a meeting. There is no down time in Jack's day. Staffers line up at his door waiting for a minute of his time. His clients inundate him with hundreds of messages a day. When he's not traveling for business, Jack gets home at around 9:30 p.m. In the 20 years he's been married he has hardly ever eaten dinner with his family. At around 11:00 p.m., Jack checks his voice and e-mails. He goes to sleep at 1:30 a.m.

Diana is in her late 20s. She doesn't drink or smoke, lifts weights three times a week and participates in a strenuous

Model: Michael Harrison
Shot on location at Able Imaging, Cherry Hill




Photo by Patrick Simone

cardio class five times a week. She is compulsive about her eating habits, maintaining a low-fat diet. To de-stress, she practices yoga and gets weekly massages. She also sees a nutritionist for herbal supplements. She is dedicated to going for annual physicals with her family physician and gynecologist. Recently, Diana lost her mother and aunt to cancer. She is terrified that the same thing might happen to her.

Sound familiar? If any of the above stories resonate a little too loudly within you, you may need to sit down and take a long, hard look at yourself. I don't mean your superficial self. I mean the inner you. What wouldn't you do to be able to painlessly penetrate the surface of your body and look deep inside to reveal abnormalities or the beginnings of fatal illnesses? Wouldn't it be great if there were some sort of medical crystal ball that could predict or detect diseases before symptoms appeared? If you had access to the technology that could show you what really lurks beneath your surface, wouldn't you be among the first in line for it?

The Future of Preventative Medicine

Well get ready, because that technology is here. It's called Preventative Imaging Screening and it is revolutionizing the way in which many people manage their health. Preventative Imaging Screening is a painless, non-invasive procedure used to detect disease or abnormalities in the neck, chest, heart, abdomen and pelvic regions. Coronary artery disease, renal disease, pre-cancerous growths, lung damage from smoking and various other diseases can be detected at their earliest stages when they can still be successfully managed or treated. Proponents of Preventative Imaging say that it can save your life. In addition to early detection, once you know your health risks, lifestyle changes can help prevent disease.

"An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," says Dr. Norman Ruttenberg, medical director and radiologist at Able Imaging in Cherry Hill, NJ. "This technology will play a very big part in the future of medicine." The technology to which Ruttenberg refers is the GE Lightspeed Multi-Slice CT scanner, the next generation in CT scanning that enables exams to be performed up to eight times faster than other scanners. It quickly scans the body, taking three-dimensional views of your beating heart, breathing lungs and other organs. CT, or Computed Tomography, marries computers and X-ray technology to allow the scanner to simultaneously capture multiple images of internal anatomy while increasing clarity. And, it does this in a matter of seconds. In addition, unlike previous CT scanners, patients are exposed to a minimum amount of radiation during this short exam.

Journey to the Center of Your Body

"Generally, Preventative Imaging Screening is for males over the age of 40, females over 45, or anyone with a predilection for disease," says Ruttenberg. "This is a way to screen people to find problems early enough to treat them."

Able Imaging offers two types of Preventative Imaging: The Full Body Scan and Cardiac Scoring. The Full Body Scan provides a precise three-dimensional visualization of your body. In a matter of seconds, the Full Body Scan can assess your current state of health, from neck to pelvis, and detect early signs of cancer, aneurysms, lung diseases, cysts or tumors, kidney and gall stones, ovarian disease, heart disease, vascular disease, endocrine disease, prostate disease and disease of the spine.

Having a hard time envisioning how this new technology works? Imagine taking a three-dimensional journey through your body. You visit your heart to look for microscopic amounts of plaque that might signal a future heart attack. You journey to your lungs to look for the earliest stages of smoke damage, lung cancer or emphysema. A trip to your spine allows you to look for disc disease and other back problems. The liver, pancreas, kidneys and other internal organs are checked for tumors, cysts and stones. A trip to the ovaries, uterus or prostate, thyroid and parathyroid detect disease of those body parts.

HAIR FOLLICLE TRANSPLANTATION GALLAGHER MEDICAL GROUP



What are you waiting for?

Live the life you always wanted... right now.

The Gallagher Medical Group is a private practice devoted to **STEREO- MICROSCOPIC HAIR FOLLICLE TRANSPLANTATION** for a completely natural look.

Call now for a complimentary consultation and information booklet.

210 West Rittenhouse • Suite 407 • Philadelphia, PA 19103
215.985.5900 • 1.800.916.0008 • www.drgallagher.com

In just one visit, get a smile twice as bright!

BRITE SMILE



Make sure your smile sparkles for the holidays

Harold B. Yaffe, D.D.S. Paul J. Berson, D.D.S.

DENTAL OFFICES

1601 WALNUT STREET • PHILADELPHIA • SUITE 704
215.567.0800

Are You At Risk?

Cardiac Scoring, the second type of Preventative Imaging is a painless, non-invasive procedure that screens for calcium deposits that can lead to clogged coronary arteries. Because of the speed at which the GE Lightspeed CT captures images, it is possible to get scans of the heart between beats. This procedure can help predict cardiovascular disease before it becomes symptomatic, when changes in lifestyle and/or drug therapies can help prevent serious heart problems.

The primary cause of heart disease is the build up of plaque in the arteries that cause them to narrow. In addition, plaque that breaks away from the artery walls can cause a blockage. In either case, the heart does not receive enough oxygen and blood and a heart attack can occur. Risk factors for heart disease include a family history of heart disease, diabetes, being overweight, high cholesterol and/or blood pressure, a high stress lifestyle and aging. According to recent statistics generated by the American Cancer Society and based upon U.S. facts and figures, over 1.2 million people are diagnosed with cancer each year. Each year, cancer claims the lives of more than half a million people. The medical costs to battle this disease are staggering and number in the billions of dollars.

Preventative Imaging Scanning, through early detection and intervention as needed, might be able to lower these statistics and prolong life. But pregnant women should not undergo this test. Also, those with a known cardiac disease might get a false reading.

What You Don't Know Can Hurt You

Knowledge is power, especially when it comes to the inner workings of your body. But, if you have a few bad habits and are not prepared to change your lifestyle, Preventative Imaging Screening might not be for you. "There's no way you're going to come in to have the test done and not be willing to make some behavioral changes," says Charlene Sims, center administrator at Able Imaging. "It provides a very good scare tactic. People are changing their lifestyles, especially when it comes to cardiac care." Explains Ruttenberg, "You might wake up one day and think, 'Hey, I'm 45. I've been smoking.

I'd like to clean up my lifestyle.' A lawyer came in recently and found out he had emphysema of his lungs. That caught his attention."

Preparation, the Procedure and the Costs

A comprehensive medical history questionnaire needs to be completed prior to the test. Because it is non-invasive, no other preparation is needed, other than donning a hospital gown. A trained technician who works under the supervision of the radiologist will perform the test by positioning you on the scanning table and placing electrodes at specific points on your body. The entire CT scan takes approximately one minute.

Following the test, a Board Certified Radiologist will meet with you to review and explain the results. At this time, a detailed written report will be provided. Please note that this technology should not be a substitute for your annual physical. It should be used as an addition to your routine medical care. It also does not take the place of the mammogram, the test that, according to Ruttenberg, "is still the gold standard for breast disease."

The cost for the Full Body Scan, which includes Cardiac Scoring, is \$750; Cardiac Scoring alone is \$350. Payment is due at the time of service and currently, the procedure is not covered under insurance. (If, however, you are referred by a physician because of high risk factors, some insurance plans may cover a portion of the cost.) "I think that will change when insurance companies realize it's cheaper to prevent disease than to treat it," says Ruttenberg. And, despite the out-of-pocket cost, many people are clamoring to have it done. (Able Imaging offers several payment methods, including most major credit cards and personal checks.)

The Nay Sayers

Although this might seem like the ideal tool for early detection and prevention of certain diseases, Preventative Imaging does have its detractors. Some point to the increased emotional toll of knowing precisely what evils are potentially lurking inside one's own body. Others claim that the knowledge will result in the demand for unnecessary surgeries or drug therapies. Still others point to the fact that the likelihood of finding significant disease is very small. We say, the more you know about your own body, the better.

Looking Fate in the Eye

As has already been stated, Preventative Imaging should not be used as the sole evaluator of one's health. Instead, "it complements the annual physical," notes Sims. And, while the idea of searching inside one's body is overwhelming and intimidating, many diseases, when caught early, can be treated or reversed. According to literature produced by Able Imaging, "Results of this examination can encourage you to look at your health differently and initiate a healthier lifestyle."

Dramatic subheads aside, the next step is entirely up to you. Able Imaging offers daytime and evening hours and can provide transportation to and from their location. If you want to take a virtual tour through your body to uncover potential threats to your health, call toll free: 1-866-5-SCANME. It could be a minute very well spent. •



Plastic Surgery Associates

Paul M. Glat, M.D. Emily F. Pollard, M.D.

We are dedicated to providing high-quality, state-of-the-art cosmetic surgical services.



Breast Augmentation/Lift/Reduction

Rhinoplasty • Face and Eyelid Surgery

Liposuction/Tummy Tuck • Botox/Collagen Injections

Laser Hair Removal • Full Skin Care Enhancement

Members



555 City Line Avenue, Suite 1170
Bala Cynwyd, PA 19004

610-667-0100

www.drflat.com www.epollardmd.com



The Center for Full Body Scanning

*How often have you heard,
"If we had only caught this
sooner, the outcome may have
been different?"*



*When your health is at stake,
early detection can make all
the difference.*

Able Imaging now offers a painless, non-invasive technology that will give you the answers you need – **Preventative Imaging.**

Able Imaging is one of the first centers in the Northeast region to offer The Full Body Scan and the Heart CT utilizing General Electric's Lightspeed CT Scanner.

In a little over a minute, pictures of your heart and internal organs are taken which can reveal life-threatening diseases long before any symptoms appear.

To learn more about how this new, life saving technology can help you – please call toll free 1-866-777-9622.

2051 Springdale Rd. • Cherry Hill, • NJ 08003

www.ableimaging.com