



## Ductal Cell-Based Risk Assessment Statement

*This document replaces the previous official statement of April 30, 2003 -- Ductal Lavage and Cell-Based Risk Assessment.*

Individualized risk assessment is important for patient management and includes review of sampled pathology. The most widely used risk assessment tool, the Gail Model, has been validated as a method of estimating breast cancer risk.

A variety of techniques exist to obtain ductal epithelial cells for examination, including open surgical biopsy, fine needle aspiration (FNA), nipple aspirate fluid (NAF), and ductal lavage. Studies of surgical biopsy, FNA and NAF report a 5-fold increase in the relative risk of developing breast cancer when cellular atypia is found. The presence of atypia coupled with a first degree family history of breast cancer confers an 11-fold increase in relative risk of developing breast cancer.

Ductal lavage is a minimally-invasive method of collecting breast epithelial cells for cytological examination. Cytologic interpretation of fluid obtained by ductal lavage is not an approved screening tool for the detection of breast cancer. The American Society of Breast Surgeons cautions that ductal lavage should not replace standard cancer screening methods. Long-term studies are necessary to better define the risk assessment contribution of cytologic atypia detected via these and other methods. The American Society of Breast Surgeons encourages participation in such trials.

### References:

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Board of Directors  
The American Society of Breast Surgeons