

Race from page A13

nancy in the other breast. It left her wondering why ultrasound wasn't the foremost tool.

"Mammography is the only tool that can do the whole breast tissue," Pottin-ga explained. She speculated that because of what the mammogram showed or a doctor suspected, ultra-sound was used to zoom in on a specific location. "The ultrasound is used to pinpoint but isn't useful in a general sense."

Ten percent of women with cancer in one breast develop it in the other, she added.

"Ultrasound can be used in conjunction," Peters seconded, as a multiple imaging technique. "I just hired this guy from NASA to come in and work for us," he reported.

The idea is to apply technology that is so specific that it can pick out a particular site in New York City from outer space to finding tumors.

Dr. Barbara Henike, a psychiatrist from St. John's Hospital, said she was on the panel to help educate people about breast cancer to fulfill an unspoken promise to a patient, "Mrs. T," a victim of the disease.

"She could have been my best friend, my business partner, my sister or me," Henike described. "She took me into her reality. She came to me because of the fear that paralyzed her at that time."

"As we progressed through surgery, chemotherapy, radiation, she took me on that journey. She became like a war-

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Dr. Jane Pettinga
Breast surgeon

rior preparing for battle. She loved life even more as she slipped away from us.


"I had to fight myself about the unfairness of it all," Henike said. "Mrs. T. was 65 years old. Her last hope was that neither of her daughters would have to go through it."

Having breast cancer in your immediate family is a risk factor, although just 20 percent of patients can confirm a familial link. But most breast cancer does not have a genetic basis, Pettinga reported.

Other high risk factors include menstruation before age 11 and/or menopause after 54, and having a first child after age 30.

"The vast majority don't have risk factors," Pettinga told them. "They're female and getting older."

Don't give up on it, Peters urged the audience, who certainly weren't about to after what many of them had survived. "We're not there yet," he said, "but the race for the cure is well within our hands."



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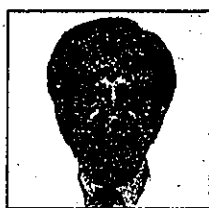
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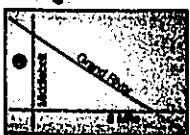
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