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Using Computer-extracted Image Phenotypes from Tumors on Breast MRI to Predict Breast Cancer Pathologic Stage

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Abstract

Background—To demonstrate that computer-extracted image phenotypes (CEIPs) of biopsy-proven breast cancer on MRI can accurately predict pathologic stage.

Methods—We used a dataset of de-identified breast MRIs organized by the National Cancer Institute in The Cancer Imaging Archive. We analyzed 91 biopsy-proven breast cancer cases with pathologic stage (stage I = 22; stage II = 58; stage III = 11) and surgically proven nodal status

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(negative nodes = 46, 1 positive node = 44, no nodes examined = 1). We characterized tumors by (a) radiologist measured size, and (b) CEIP. We built models combining two CEIPs to predict tumor pathologic stage and lymph node involvement, evaluated them in leave-one-out cross-validation with area under the ROC curve (AUC) as figure of merit.

Results—Tumor size was the most powerful predictor of pathologic stage but CEIPs capturing biologic behavior also emerged as predictive (e.g. stage I+II vs. III demonstrated AUC = 0.83). No size measure was successful in the prediction of positive lymph nodes but adding a CEIP describing tumor “homogeneity,” significantly improved this discrimination (AUC = 0.62, $p=0.003$) over chance.

Conclusions—Our results indicate that MRI phenotypes show promise for predicting breast cancer pathologic stage and lymph node status.

Keywords

breast cancer stage; prognosis; quantitative image analysis; MRI

Introduction¹

Historically, one of the most important roles of imaging in women with breast cancer was to accurately predict stage in order to direct patients to appropriate treatment and provide accurate prognosis. At the time of diagnosis, imaging is primarily used to establish “clinical” stage (as defined by the American Joint Committee on Cancer 7th edition —AJCC 7) prior to surgical intervention, after which time “pathologic” stage drives further decision-making¹. However, the TNM staging system in the era of biomarkers, genomic analysis, and personalized medicine is increasingly viewed as limited^{2,3}. The emergence of tumor biology⁴ as perhaps the most powerful factor driving prognosis has engendered substantial interest in understanding how biomarkers like those seen on breast MRI may help predict pathologic stage and thus inform optimal therapy.

Management decisions are driven by clinical stage including the use of whole-body imaging to evaluate for metastatic disease, election to undergo neoadjuvant chemotherapy, appropriate surgical management and radiation therapy planning¹. In general, women with clinical stage III disease, in contrast to women with clinical stage I or II disease, have a higher risk for metastatic disease and thus routinely undergo systemic imaging; are candidates for neoadjuvant chemotherapy; and are less likely to be candidates for breast conservation therapy and sentinel node procedures⁵. As an example, the decision to proceed with neoadjuvant chemotherapy is necessarily a judgment based on clinical stage without knowledge of pathologic stage, thus is based primarily on imaging; with MRI often playing a key role. Breast MRI has been shown to be an accurate method for predicting extent of breast cancer⁶ as well as demonstrating axillary lymph node involvement through direct evaluation of the axilla⁷⁻¹⁰. However, MRI may overestimate tumor size¹¹ and underestimate axillary lymph node involvement, therefore, imaging has not yet obviated the need for surgical staging including sentinel biopsy or axillary lymph node dissection⁸.

¹Abbreviations: CEIP: computer-extracted image phenotype, TCGA: The Cancer Genome Atlas, TCIA: The Cancer Imaging Archive

Current research indicates that quantitative MRI tumor biomarkers, i.e., phenotypes, rather than anatomic evaluation, may hold promise in predicting malignancy¹²⁻¹⁵, breast cancer subtypes¹⁶⁻²¹ molecular pathways²², gene expression^{23,24} and lymph node status^{10,25,26}. However, little literature is available to demonstrate whether computer-extracted MRI phenotypes, can augment prediction of pathologic stage. Our goal in this study was to determine whether computer extracted phenotypes of biopsy-proven breast cancer on MRI can predict breast cancer pathologic stage and which phenotypes are most important.

Material and Methods

Study population

All patient data used in this study were obtained under IRB-approved HIPAA compliant protocols. The current study had access to de-identified data only and the project derived cases from the cohort collected via The Cancer Genome Atlas—TCGA (<https://tcga-data.nci.nih.gov>) Breast Cancer (BRCA) initiative for which cases were solicited from five comprehensive cancer centers across the US. The TCGA was established to create a repository of tissue samples sufficient for deep genomic and proteomic analysis. Each tissue sample was required to contain 200-300 mg of tissue. Thus, for breast a surgical excision was necessary to obtain this amount of tissue. Each tissue sample was also required to be “treatment-naïve,” therefore, each patient eligible for inclusion in the TCGA database could not have had preoperative treatment of any kind. Collection of MRI images followed, as a secondary initiative, after the tissue samples met the criteria for inclusion in the TCGA. At the time of our study, 1,078 breast cancer cases had been collected under the auspices of the ongoing TCGA initiative. Active collection of breast MRI data for a subset of these individuals had established an MRI dataset of 108 examinations made available in The Cancer Imaging Archive—TCIA (<http://http://www.cancerimagingarchive.net>). The majority of these breast MRI studies were performed following a breast cancer diagnosis established by image-guided core needle biopsy and all of the MRI examinations included in this study were performed prior to any treatment. Of these cases, 48 MRI cases had been previously analyzed by Mazurowski et al., who related MRI enhancement dynamics to the luminal B subtype, however the analysis was not conducted as part of the TCIA Breast Cancer group [22].

For our study, all breast MRI data were downloaded from the TCIA and clinical, pathological, and genetic information was compiled using TCGA assembler, a free open-source publicly available tool²⁷. In order to impose imaging uniformity, we included the majority of breast MRI studies similar in acquisition and technique (1.5 Tesla magnet strength using GE Medical Systems, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA); a total of 93 cases. We excluded cases that had missing images (1 patient) or missing genetic data (1 patient). Hence, we included a data set of 91 breast MRI cases.

Image data

Breast MRIs analyzed in this study were contributed by four institutions (of the five contributing to TCIA): Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, The Mayo Clinic, The University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, and Roswell Park Cancer Institute. The cases

contributed by each institution were 9 (date range 1999-2002), 5 (1999-2003), 46 (1999-2004), and 31 (1999-2002), respectively. All MRIs were acquired using a standard double breast coil on a 1.5T GE whole-body MRI system (GE Medical Systems, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA). Only T1-weighted dynamic contrast-enhanced MR images were used in our current study. The imaging protocols included one pre- and three to five post-contrast images obtained using a T1-weighted 3D spoiled gradient echo sequence with a gadolinium-based contrast agent (Omniscan; Nycomed-Amersham, Princeton, NJ). Typical in-plane resolution was 0.53-0.86 mm, and typical spacing between slices was 2-3 mm.

Three expert board-certified breast radiologists blinded to outcome data independently reviewed each breast MRI examination. Each radiologist identified and annotated the image location of the primary breast tumor and measured maximal tumor diameter using a linear measurement tool. Tumor location on MRI was determined using radiologist reviewer information (via a posteriori consensus). The average maximal diameter as measured by the 3 readers (heretofore called “radiologist size”) was used for comparison to our computer-derived measurements (Figure 1). Each primary breast tumor was then automatically segmented in 3D from the surrounding parenchyma²⁸.

Extraction of MRI-based computer-extracted image phenotypes

A total of 38 MRI features, each heretofore referred to as a computer-extracted image phenotype (CEIP), were calculated based on the automatically derived 3D tumor segmentations. Since, computationally speaking, many CEIPs can describe a single physical characteristic (such as shape), we divided the CEIPs into six phenotype categories (Figure 2, Supplemental Table 1): 1) **size**—measuring tumor dimensions (4 CEIP), 2) **shape**—quantifying the three-dimensional geometry (3 CEIP), 3) **morphology**—combining shape and margin characteristics such as margin sharpness (3 CEIP), 4) **enhancement texture**—describing the texture of the contrast uptake in the tumor on the first post-contrast MR images (14 CEIP), 5) **kinetic curve assessment**—describing the shape of the kinetic curve and assessing the physiological process of the uptake and washout of the contrast agent in the tumor during the dynamic imaging series (10 CEIP), and 6) **enhancement-variance kinetics**—characterizing the time course of the spatial variance of the enhancement within the tumor (4 CEIP).

We investigated the relationship between “radiologist size” and pathologic stage and lymph node status. We also similarly calculated Pearson correlation coefficients to assess the relationship between pathologic T-stage with “radiologist size” and computer extracted CEIPs from the size category. Actual clinical stage (including T-stage) was not available in our dataset, so we use radiologist size as a surrogate for clinical T-stage. This substitution is reasonable because clinicians commonly use the largest measurement on any imaging modality to establish the T-stage. If MRI is performed, the MRI measurement, often, though not always, informs the clinical T stage.

We assessed five classification tasks. Four tasks involved prediction of pathologic stage: a) stage I versus stage III, b) stage II versus stage III, c) stage I versus stage II, and d) stage I +II versus stage III tumors. The fifth task predicted nodal status: distinguishing between

tumors with negative nodes and those with one or more positive nodes. For each of the classification tasks, we determined which single CEIP obtained the best performance in distinguishing between the two sub-groups (e.g. stage I+II versus stage III tumors). Subsequently, for each of the five classification tasks, we determined which CEIP was the next best performer and from a *different* phenotype category than the best performing CEIP. Correlation coefficients were calculated between the first and the second CEIPs to assess whether the CEIPs revealed complementary or largely dependent information. The top 2 CEIPs for each classification task, determined as detailed above, were combined in linear discriminant models (one “2-CEIP model” for each classification task). We also calculated the Pearson correlation coefficients between the top two CEIPs from different categories (those included in the 2-CEIP models) in order to determine to what extent these variables were related. For the prediction of lymph node status, the CEIPs were also evaluated stratified by radiologist size estimates, our surrogate for clinical T-stage (≤ 2 cm [T1]; >2 to ≤ 5 cm [T2]; or > 5 cm [T3]).

Statistical analysis

Leave-one-out cross-validation was used to train/test the 2-CEIP tumor assessment models for each of the classification tasks. Performance (whether for “radiologist size”, single CEIPs, or 2-CEIP models) was evaluated using receiver operating characteristic (ROC) analysis, with the area under the curve (AUC) as the figure of merit, using the semi-parametric ‘proper’ ROC model²⁹⁻³¹. We determined statistical significance of differences in AUC through bootstrapping (1000 iterations) using a p-value threshold of 0.05 to indicate statistical significance for a single comparison. We corrected for multiple comparisons using the Holm-Bonferroni method.³²

Results

Patient Population

Ninety-one breast MRIs in patients with biopsy-proven invasive tumors met our inclusion criteria (Table 1 and Table 2). The included invasive carcinomas demonstrated a preponderance of estrogen and progesterone receptor positivity (85% and 79%, respectively). Though the human epidermal growth factor receptor type 2 (HER-2) status was known in only 69% (63/91) of cases, and the majority of these were HER-2 negative (49/63, 78%) as compared to HER-2 positive (14/63, 22%). Lymph node status was almost equally divided between negative and positive with only one case unknown. No patients were documented to have distant metastatic disease. Tumor stage is outlined in Table 2.

Tumor size analysis

For the 91 tumors, the mean “radiologist size” was 2.41 cm (STD \pm 0.91; range 0.78-5.93). There were 36 (39.6%) tumors ≤ 2 cm, 54 (59.3%) > 2 cm but ≤ 5 cm, and 1 tumor (1.1%) > 5 cm. The comparison of radiologist size versus pathologic stage (Figure 3a) and versus lymph node status (Figure 3b) demonstrate that the “radiologist size” alone has limited ability to predict stage or lymph node status (also illustrated by Table 4). The correlation coefficients between the “radiologist size” and the four “computer size” CEIPs ranged from 0.63 (surface area) to 0.79 (effective diameter) all with significant p-values (ranging from

10^{-19} to 10^{-11}). Correlation coefficients between pathologic stage and different size estimates: “radiologist size,” surface area, maximum linear size, and effective diameter were 0.66, 0.63, 0.61 and 0.61 respectively (p-values 10^{-12} — 10^{-10}).

MRI-based computer-extracted image phenotypes analysis

For all the five classification tasks, the CEIP providing the best distinction was always related to tumor size (Table 3), with the surface area (Figure 4a) being the best performer in three tasks and effective diameter in two tasks. All of the discrimination tasks performed statistically significantly better than chance (AUC=0.50) except for the prediction of lymph node status, for which size-based phenotypes alone (human or computer) failed to demonstrate statistical significance over baseline chance (Table 4). We used box plots to visualize how well the most promising CEIPs were able predict pathologic stage (Figure 4).

The most frequent “next-best performing” CEIP for our selected classification tasks (not in the size category) was enhancement texture homogeneity (Table 3), i.e. the homogeneity of the contrast uptake within the tumor at the first post-contrast time-point, with later stage cancers trending towards a more homogeneous appearance (Figure 4b). For the 2-CEIP models, 3 out of the 5 discrimination tasks showed improvement over size alone preserving AUC statistical significance over chance (Table 4). In addition, the performance of the 2-CEIP for lymph node assessment was moderate (AUC=0.62) and became statistically different from baseline chance ($p=0.003$)—the AUC using the size alone (either radiologist or computer) was not statistically significantly different than chance (Table 4). Correlation coefficients between the two “top-performing” CEIPs (surface area and effective diameter) and the “next-best-performing” CEIP (homogeneity) revealed that there was a low correlation between surface area and homogeneity $r = 0.16$ ($p = 0.12$) but moderate correlation between effective diameter and homogeneity $r = 0.31$ ($p=0.003$).

After stratifying by “radiologist size”, the CEIP most promising for the distinction between tumors ≤ 2 cm with positive and negative lymph nodes, respectively, was irregularity, a morphological feature (AUC=0.73, Figure 4c). Irregularity, however, had little if any discriminatory capabilities for larger tumors (>2 cm and ≤ 5 cm). For those larger tumors, the best performing CEIP was enhancement texture homogeneity (AUC=0.74, Figure 4d). Homogeneity, in turn, added no benefit in identifying node status for small lesions ≤ 2 cm.

Discussion

Our results demonstrate that computer-extracted image phenotypes (CEIP) of invasive breast cancer derived from MRI examinations has the potential to help predict pathologic stage. As expected, tumor size metrics (extracted by either the human or the computer) consistently appeared as the most powerful predictor of pathologic stage. We saw a non-significant trend that computer extracted CEIPs related to size were superior to the human extracted size, perhaps because these features are highly correlated with each other as well as pathologic stage. Importantly, we found another, more biologic phenotype—enhancement texture homogeneity—consistently exhibited discriminative ability for pathologic stage. It is important to note that this enhancement texture phenotype describes the homogeneity of the contrast agent distribution, i.e., pattern, within the tumor at a specific (the first post-contrast)

time point. Further stratification by tumor size demonstrated that homogeneity predicted lymph node status well in larger tumors while “irregularity,” another CEIP, was more predictive in smaller tumors.

Tumor size is an important part of clinical stage and thus it is consistent that tumor size measurements as determined by the computer perform well in the prediction of pathologic stage. Clinicians routinely use the single largest tumor measurement (either on imaging or clinical exam) to determine the “T-stage.” It is interesting to note that, the best computer-extracted size measurement was “surface area” or “effective diameter” (the diameter of a sphere with the same volume as the lesion) (Table 3) rather than “maximum linear size”, which most closely resembles the radiologists' linear tumor measurement. This result makes sense because a linear tumor size measurement in one dimension does not fully represent the 3D tumor structure and hence has limitations as an indicator for actual tumor burden. It is also noteworthy that homogeneity of contrast uptake is more predictive of pathologic stage than other biologically-related variables and was not well correlated with size CEIPs (thus adding unique predictive power). Increased enhancement texture homogeneity was associated with increased tumor stage. A physiologic explanation for the homogeneity of stage III cancers is their increased microvascular density, compared to stage I and II cancers. Increased microvascular density is the sequelae of tumor related angiogenesis, which, in the absence of central necrosis, allows for rapid and evenly-distributed contrast uptake in the entire tumor (Figure 5)^{33,34}. In smaller tumors, where the microvascular density is less, the homogeneity CEIP, and thus angiogenesis, may be less important while morphologic CEIPs, like irregularity, conveying an invasive growth pattern, may dominate in predictive tasks with regard to pathologic stage.

We have found no previously published studies using MRI phenotypes to predict pathologic stage, however, two manuscripts outline attempts to predict lymph node status, a related task. Bhooshan et al. found that homogeneity as well as other MRI phenotypes predicted lymph node positivity for women with invasive breast cancers³⁵. Loisel et al. found that MRI phenotypes (total persistent enhancement and volume adjusted peak enhancement) predicted lymph node burden (4 axillary nodes) in women with a positive sentinel lymph node biopsy¹⁰. Bhooshan et al also explored the use of computer extracted MRI phenotypes to augment the prediction of invasive breast cancer grade exhibiting equivalent AUCs to those we found (grade I vs. III, AUC = 0.80; grade II vs. III, AUC = 0.62; and grade I vs. II, AUC = 0.78)³⁵. We found that improvement in pathologic stage prediction was most notable when stage III cancers were included in the prediction task. Predicting patients with stage III breast cancer is clinically important because these individuals have a worse prognosis; may require whole-body imaging such as PET-CT to evaluate for metastatic disease; may be considered for neoadjuvant chemotherapy; and surgical management is less straightforward⁵. Breast MRI enhancement texture homogeneity (in larger stage III tumors) and irregularity (in smaller stage I and II tumors) may help to distinguish women of higher stage, particularly if conventional imaging and physical examination are limited such as in the case of dense breasts. Future work will include an analysis of a larger cohort segregated by grade and characteristics for identification of the best combination of predictors through a multivariate linear regression model.

Limitations of this study should be considered when interpreting results. Our patient population was predetermined by the inclusion criteria of the TCGA initiative. The TCGA initiative collected pathologic samples in women with large enough tumors to provide the requisite 200-300 mg of tissue needed for the study. Only women who were surgical candidates (i.e. did not have metastatic disease), were eligible for this study. Therefore, our results can only be generalized to this group. Though the TCGA is a select patient population, it is an important and clinically relevant population. Because the majority of women in our cohort had core-biopsy-proven breast cancer and subsequently underwent breast MRI prior to definitive surgical (or any other) therapy, these patients represent the population for which prediction of pathologic stage to determine clinical management is most pertinent. Our patient sample was relatively small because only a limited number of breast MRI examinations are available in the TCGA/TCIA database. Our data set contained only 11 stage III cancers. For this reason, we did not perform automated feature selection but instead used a more targeted approach to CEIP-based model development. Furthermore, it appears that a large number of our breast cancer cases are ER+, PR+ and HER2+ (i.e. likely luminal A or B) ⁴, thus perhaps limiting the generalizability of our results to these types of tumors. In addition, the MRIs that we analyzed were acquired over a decade ago, raising the possibility that our results may not reflect existing MRI technology, which has advanced substantially in the interval. Given improved spatial resolution, higher signal-to-noise, and more standardized protocols, our results may, therefore, be conservative. We did not have access to clinical stage or patient outcome, therefore, it will be important to verify whether MRI CEIPs augment prediction of clinical course in addition to pathologic stage to truly target personalized care and thus impact important outcomes like morbidity and mortality. Despite these limitations, the TCGA dataset provided a unique opportunity to examine CEIPs from breast MRI examinations from multiple institutions (on the cutting edge of breast MRI technique at the time of data collection) in a clinically relevant patient population.

Conclusions

We found that while tumor size remains important, computer-extracted image phenotype, like enhancement texture homogeneity and irregularity, appear to augment prediction of pathologic stage. To date, breast cancer clinical stage comprises the criteria on which appropriate therapy has been based despite assertions that biologic features should be included in algorithms that drive management ^{2,3}. While our results do not indicate that MRI features are ready to replace pathologic stage, CEIPs, like texture heterogeneity and irregularity, may have the potential to provide prognostic information to augment pathologic stage or when pathologic stage is not available, for example when women undergo neoadjuvant chemotherapy. Predicting disease behavior and personalizing care based on anatomic as well as biologic imaging features will likely improve outcomes and effectively leverage resources in the pursuit of optimal breast cancer care. In the future, continued investigation of human and computer assessed phenotypes that uniquely characterize tumors will likely play a role in advancing personalized breast cancer care.

Supplementary Material

Refer to Web version on PubMed Central for supplementary material.

Acknowledgments

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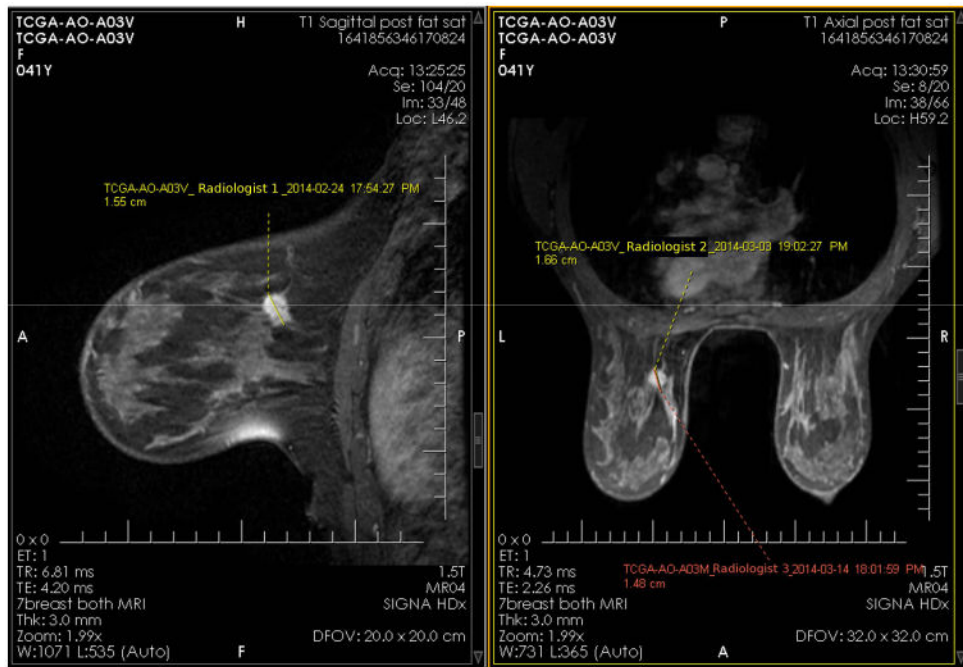


Figure 1. Representative breast MRI case depicting a sagittal fat saturated T1-weighted image with an annotation identifying the tumor and measurement (“radiologist-size”).

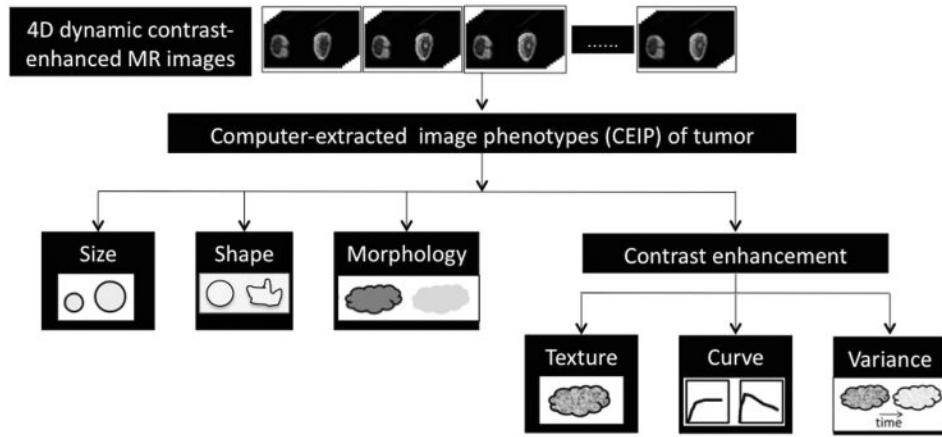


Figure 2. Schematic of the MRI-based computer-extracted image phenotypes

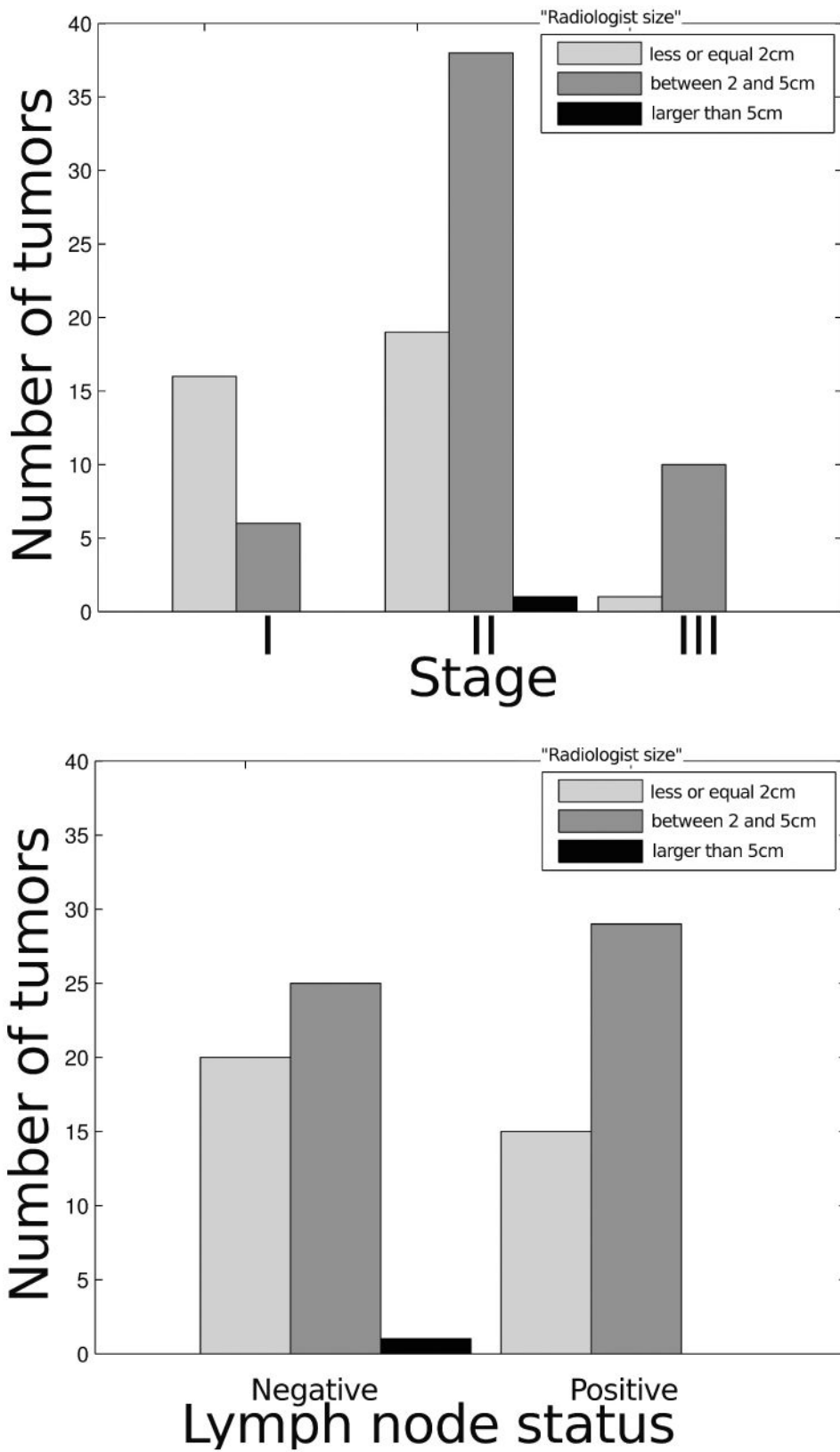


Figure 3.

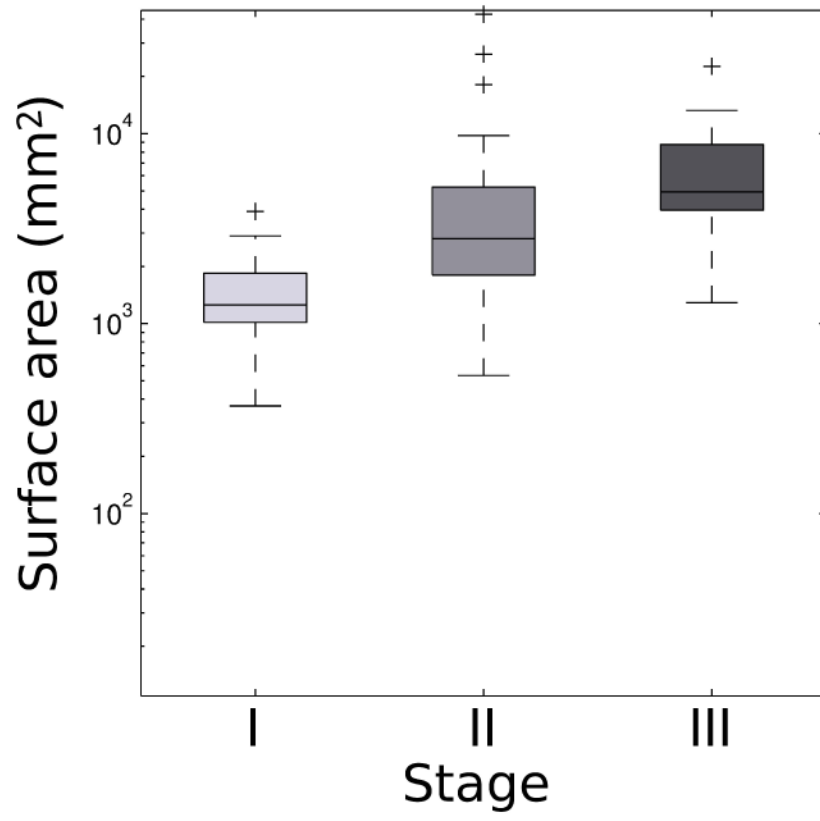
The “radiologist size” distribution (the mean value for the maximal tumor diameter assigned by the 3 expert radiologists) for a) pathologic stage, and b) pathologic lymph node status.

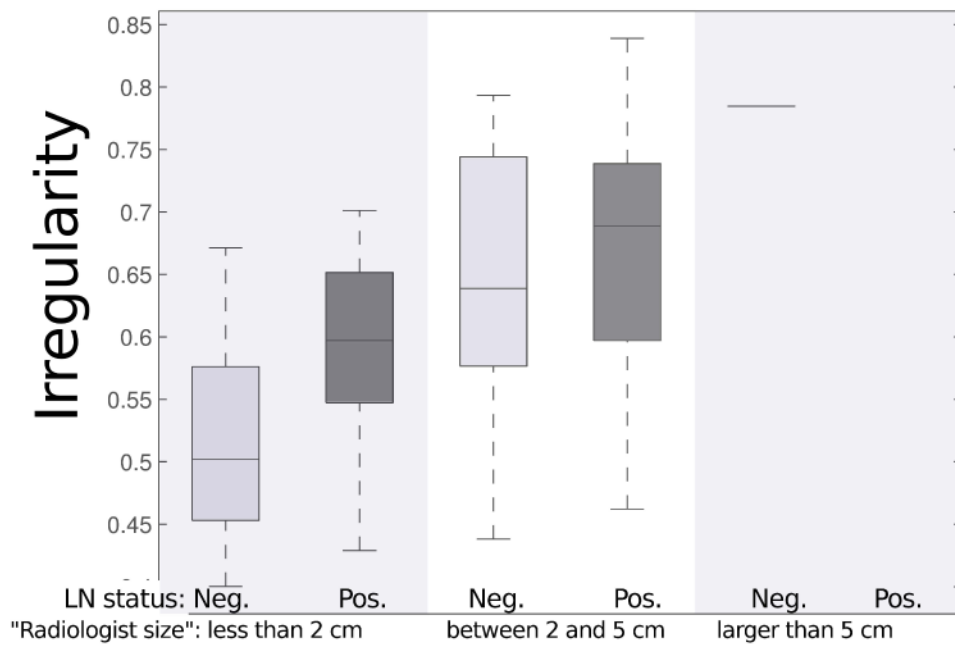
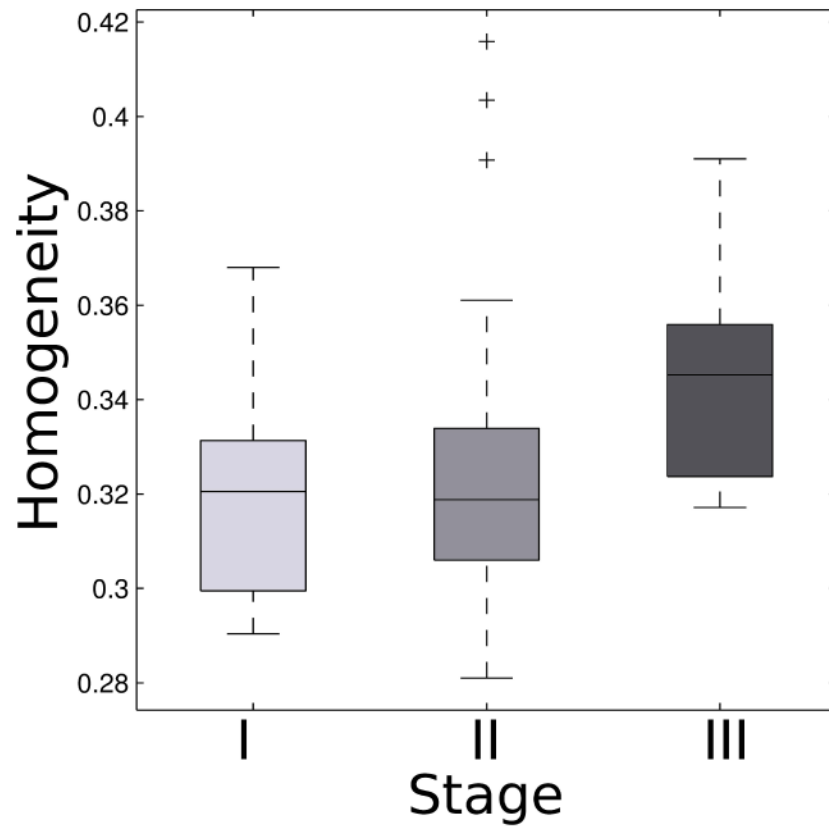
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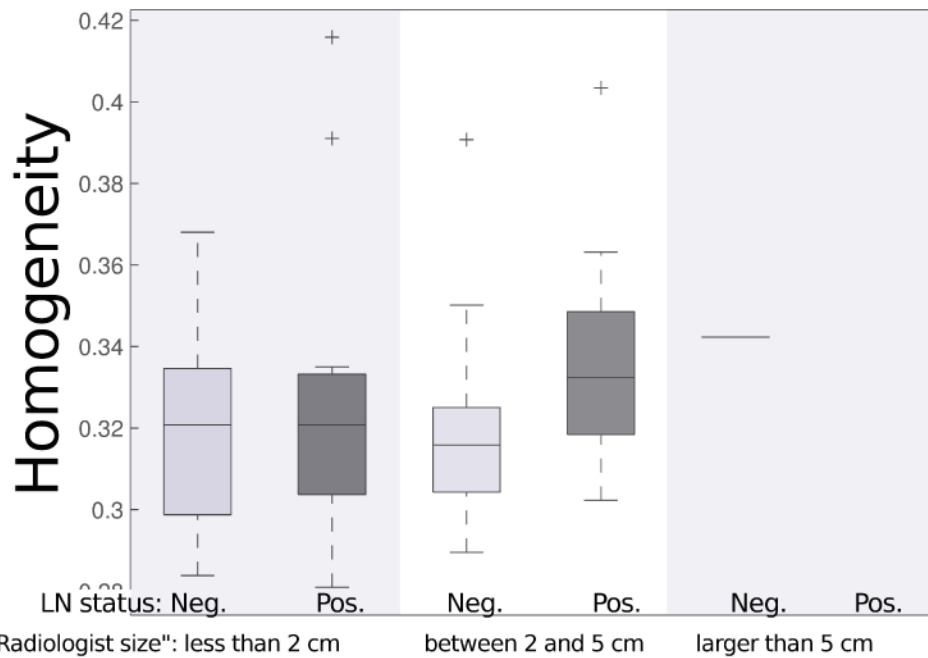
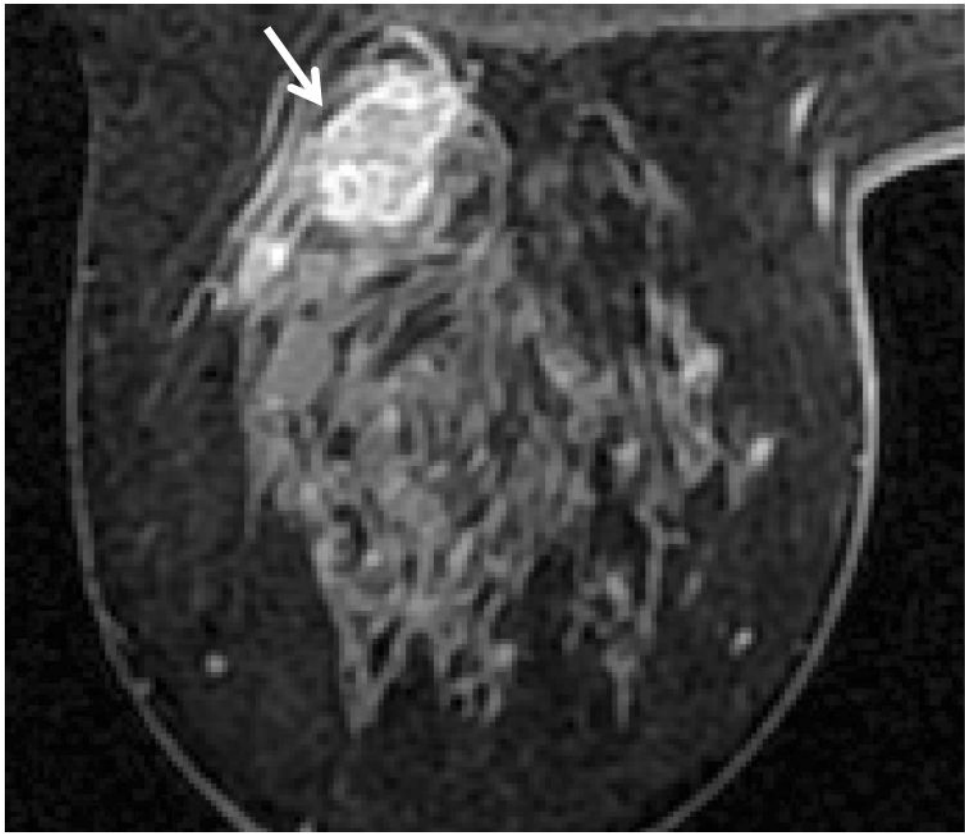


Figure 4. Distribution of CEIP values for pathologic stage: a) surface area, b) enhancement texture homogeneity (the inverse difference moment of the gray-level co-occurrence matrix calculated within the tumor at the first post-contrast image), and distribution of CEIP for “radiologist size” stratified by pathologic lymph node (LN) status c) irregularity, and d) enhancement texture homogeneity



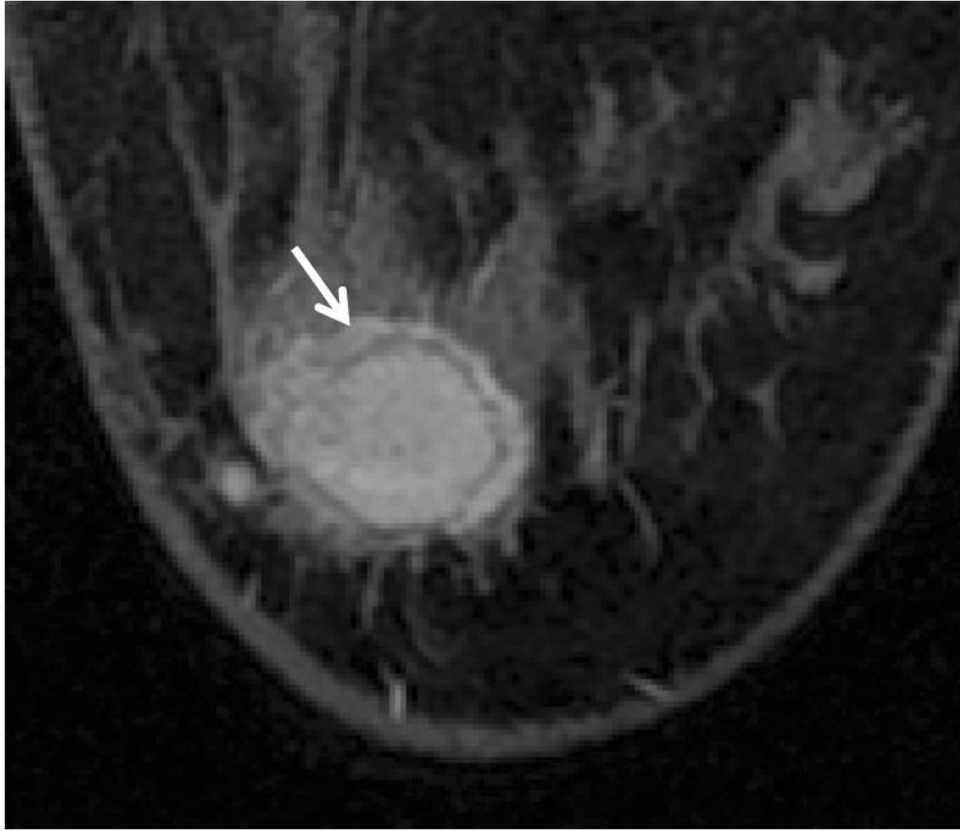


Figure 5. Example dynamic contrast-enhanced images of primary tumor (both pathologic stage II) at the first post-contrast time point: a) demonstrates a tumor proven to be lymph node negative with “low” enhancement texture homogeneity (imaged at 1 minute, 29 seconds post-contrast), and b) demonstrates a tumor proven to be lymph node positive with “high” enhancement texture homogeneity (imaged at 1 minute, 16 seconds post-contrast).

Table 1

Population demographics.

Patient characteristics		
Gender		Female
Age		53.6 (\pm 11.5) years (range 29—82 years)
Tumor characteristics		
Origin	Ductal	86.8% (79/91)
	Lobular	11.0% (10/91)
	Other/mixed	2.2% (2/91)
Estrogen receptor (ER)	positive	84.6% (77/91)
	negative	15.4% (14/91)
Progesterone receptor (PR)	positive	79.1% (72/91)
	negative	2.9% (19/91)
Human epidermal growth factor receptor 2 (HER2)	positive	15.4% (14/91)
	negative	53.8% (49/91)
	undetermined	30.8% (28/91)
Lymph node status	positive	48.4% (44/91)
	negative	50.5% (46/91)
	unknown	1.1% (1/91)

Table 2
Pathologic T,N, and stage (note that percentages may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding)

Pathologic T	
T1	4.4% (4/91)
T1b	3.3% (3/91)
T1c	34.1% (31/91)
T2	54.9% (50/91)
T3	3.3% (3/91)
Pathologic N	
N0	36.3% (33/91)
N0 (i-)	12.1% (11/91)
N0 (i+)	2.2% (2/91)
N1	7.7% (7/91)
N1a	24.2% (22/91)
N1mi	5.5% (5/91)
N2	1.1% (1/91)
N2a	5.5% (5/91)
N3	2.2% (2/91)
N3a	2.2% (2/91)
NX	1.1% (1/91)
Pathologic stage	
I	19.8% (18/91)
IA	4.4% (4/91)
II	1.1% (1/91)
IIA	44.0 (40/91)
IIB	18.7 (17/91)
IIIA	7.7% (7/91)
IIIB	0% (0/91)
IIIC	4.4% (4/91)

Table 3

Stage and lymph node classification tasks: Computer-extracted image phenotypes with the best performance in predicting pathological stage and lymph node (LN) status.

Task	Computer-extracted image phenotypes	
	Best performing	Next-best performing and of different phenotype category
Stage I vs. III (N=33)	Size: surface area	Morphological: resemblance to radial pattern
Stage II vs. III (N=69)	Size: effective diameter	Enhancement texture: homogeneity
Stage I vs. II (N=80)	Size: surface area	Shape: irregularity
Stage I+II vs. III (N=91)	Size: effective diameter	Enhancement texture: homogeneity
LN status (N=90)	Size: surface area	Enhancement texture: homogeneity

Table 4

Stage and lymph node classification tasks: The performance of a) “radiologist size”, which is the average of measurements performed by three breast radiologists, b) “computer size”, which is the best-performing MRI-based computer-extracted image phenotype (CEIP) of the size category, and c) “computer size + biology”, which is the 2-CEIP model based on the best performing CEIPs (Table 3), with all AUC values significantly better than baseline chance (AUC=0.50, with $p < 0.003$, i.e., 15 comparisons at 0.05 confidence level) except where noted

Task	AUC (\pm standard error)		
	“Radiologist size”	“Computer size”	“Computer size + biology”
Stage I vs. III (N=33)	0.79 (\pm 0.07)	0.88 (\pm 0.06)	0.88 (\pm 0.06)
Stage II vs. III (N=69)	0.60 (\pm 0.08)	0.67 (\pm 0.08)	0.80 (\pm 0.07)
Stage I vs. II (N=80)	0.69 (\pm 0.06)	0.73 (\pm 0.07)	0.73 (\pm 0.07)
Stage I+II vs. III (N=91)	0.65 (\pm 0.08)	0.74 (\pm 0.07)	0.83 (\pm 0.06)
LN status (N=90)	0.53 (\pm 0.05) [†]	0.55 (\pm 0.06) [†]	0.62 (\pm 0.05)

[†] $p \gg 0.05$ with respect to AUC=0.50