

Testimonial Sensitive Sigma™ paddle



Annually around 4000 women receive a mammographic examination at the Radiology department of the AZ St Lucas in Bruges.

A high-quality mammogram requires good training of the radiographer, as proper positioning is necessary. The examination must also be made with the "right" compression.

For some women, this compression causes so much pain and discomfort that they sometimes do not attend the screening program.

Also, for the radiographer it not always evident to know how much compression could be applied in order to get a sufficiently sharp mammogram where abnormalities could be detected faster.

When Sigmascreening presented the Sensitive Sigma™ paddle in 2016, which measured the mean pressure on the breast, and not just the compression force, this simple principle seemed too good to be true.

The Sensitive Sigma™ paddle was initially introduced for diagnostic mammograms and it indeed appeared to be a nice added value for the patient, radiographer and radiologist.

When taking a mammogram, a series of colored LED lights will light up until the ideal compression/pressure is achieved. When the ideal compression is reached, the whole row pink lights is activated.

For the radiographer, this is a useful tool to know when the correct compression has been achieved, and she will not solely be guided by what the patient indicates. The radiographer can rely on what the LED lights indicate, which gives her more confidence.

This also leads to more standardization between the radiographers as well as between the follow-up examinations within the same patient.

After 2 years of working with the Sensitive Sigma™ paddle, the radiographers indicate that it gives them extra confidence. They also indicate that they want to continue working with these paddles.

On top of that, the patients accept the mammographic compression better because they can follow how much compression is still needed based on the LED lights during the examination. This removes for a great extent the uncertainty about the expected pain and anxiety.

Radiologically, we established a lower dose and overall a more equal and slightly higher compression.

After the Sensitive Sigma™ paddle was approved for use in the Flemish screening program and several physical-technical quality tests were carried out by the department of Prof. dr. H. Bosmans at UZ Leuven, the Sensitive Sigma™ paddle was also used in our department for taking screening mammograms in the Flemish screening program.

Dr. Hilde Goris
Radiologist