



First Hand EXPERIENCE

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How Hand-carried Ultrasound Transformed Patient Care in a Breast-Only Surgical Practice

The driving force behind Dr. Deanna Attai's evolution as a surgeon is simple: to provide the best care possible for her patients. For her, that has meant converting to a breast-only practice and incorporating ultrasound into her office and surgical protocols.

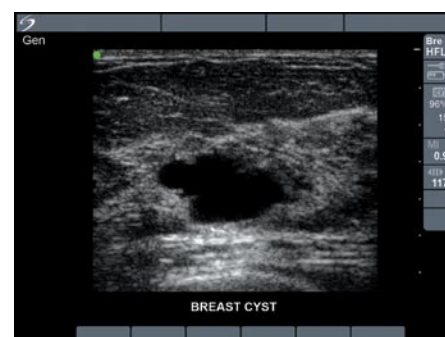
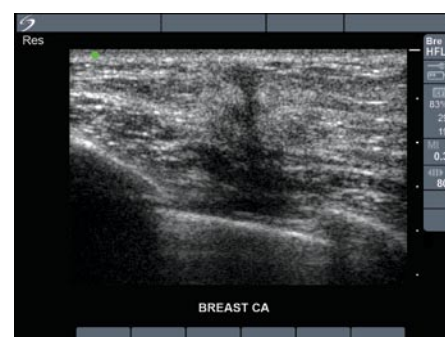
Four years ago, Dr. Attai was a busy and accomplished general surgeon who had never used hand-carried ultrasound. She had always been drawn to treating breast disease, but increasingly believed that breast patients required a different approach than other surgical candidates. She decided to convert her general surgery practice to breast-only in order to tailor her treatment approach, and in doing so found that hand-carried ultrasound is an indispensable component of superior care.

Dr. Attai uses a SonoSite MicroMaxx™ system to obtain high-resolution ultrasound images in the office and the OR. For patients, the most noticeable benefit is speed of results. During an in-office consultation, says Attai, "it only takes a couple of seconds to put the [ultrasound] transducer on, and I can see right away what's going on." In addition to getting immediate answers about palpable and nonpalpable masses, she can confidently perform fine needle aspirations and biopsies in her office.

The entire treatment team is able to move faster when the surgeon is equipped with hand-carried ultrasound. If patients need follow-up tests or procedures, scheduling is expedited because Dr. Attai knows what she's dealing with. After seeing one patient recently, she says, "I was able to call the radiologist and say 'I've got a 30-year-old and she's got cancer,' instead of just saying there's a mass and I don't know what it is." For patients confronting a potentially serious disease, quicker, better answers simply mean better care.

Dr. Attai also feels that her SonoSite system is indispensable during surgery. Before ultrasound – in what Attai now refers to as "the old days" – surgeons relied on their training, outside images, and "feel" for most interventional procedures. With a SonoSite system, she says, "I know what we're going to see when we operate because I've scanned [the patient] with the same exact equipment." By using the same system for in-office imaging and surgery, the surgeon has complete confidence in her surgical plan.

In the four years since she bought her first ultrasound system, Attai has come to believe that it is indispensable. She is one of only five surgeons in California to become certified in



breast ultrasound by the American Society of Breast Surgeons, and will soon begin training to become an instructor.

Looking back, she says, "I heard surgeons at ASBS meetings saying that once you start you can't imagine how you practiced without it. It will seem so barbaric and archaic. And I was skeptical, thinking, can it really be that big a difference? And it is. Ultrasound has changed the way I practice to the point where I will not practice without it."

continued

> **Deanna J. Attai, M.D.**, is a Board Certified General Surgeon practicing in Glendale, CA. She is a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons and is affiliated with the following facilities: Glendale Memorial Hospital and Health Center, Glendale Adventist Medical Center, Verdugo Hills Hospital, and Providence St. Joseph Medical Center.



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broadband
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HFL38
38-mm
broadband
linear array



Dr. Attai uses a SonoSite MicroMaxx with an HFL38/13-6 MHz transducer in the breast exam pre-set mode. She keeps her system on a Mobile Docking Station (MDS) and downloads images onto a PC for documentation and EMR reference using SonoSite's SiteLink™ software.

Medical Citations

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