

Editor's Note

In response to comments and suggestions raised by referees, the authors were asked to comment on the diagnostic role of electron-beam computer tomography (EBCT) in clinical practice and its clinical utility for screening patients with chest pain who are at risk for coronary artery disease. The American College of Cardiology and the American Heart Association sponsored the publication of a consensus document which reviewed the then-current literature (1) on the use of EBCT for the diagnosis and prognosis of coronary artery disease. In a recent article, Lee and Boucher (2) did not mention EBCT. Drs. Eltzhig and Ehlers, in a letter to the editor (3), called attention to studies which concluded that EBCT was useful in detecting coronary artery disease, with high sensitivity and specificity, and that the technique offered substantial cost savings. Lee, however, in his reply (4), stated that the clinical role for EBCT and its effect on patients' outcome have not yet been determined.

1. O'Rourke RA, Brundage BH, Froelicher VF, et al. American College of Cardiology/American Heart Association Expert Consensus document on electron-beam computed tomography for the diagnosis and prognosis of coronary artery disease. *Circulation* 2000; 102:126–140.
2. Lee TH, Boucher CA. Noninvasive tests in patients with stable coronary artery disease. *N Engl J Med* 2001; 344:1840–1845.
3. Eltzhig HK, Ehlers R. Noninvasive tests in patients with stable coronary artery disease [letter]. *N Engl J Med* 2001; 345:1351.
4. Lee TH. Noninvasive tests in patients with stable coronary artery disease [letter]. *N Engl J Med* 2001; 345:1351.