

Pancreatic tumors: Low-kilovoltage computed tomography (CT) for improved detection - a phantom study

L. Loizou ^{2,3*}, **J. Holm** ^{1,2*}, **N. Albiin** ^{2,3}, **N. Kartalis** ^{2,3}, **B. Leidner** ^{2,3}, **A. Sundin** ^{4,5}

*These authors contributed equally to this work

1. Division of Medical Physics, Karolinska University Hospital, Huddinge
2. Department of Clinical Science, Intervention and Technology (CLINTEC) at Karolinska Institutet
3. Department of Radiology, Karolinska University Hospital, Huddinge
4. Department of Radiology, Karolinska University Hospital, Solna
5. Department of Molecular Medicine and Surgery at Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm

Background

- 13th most common cancer worldwide
- 4th leading cause of cancer death
- 80 % unresectable
- 5 % overall 5-year survival rate
- 20 % 5-year survival rate after surgery

Late detection - bad prognosis

Small tumors – difficult to detect

MDCT sensitivity for hypodense pancreatic lesions

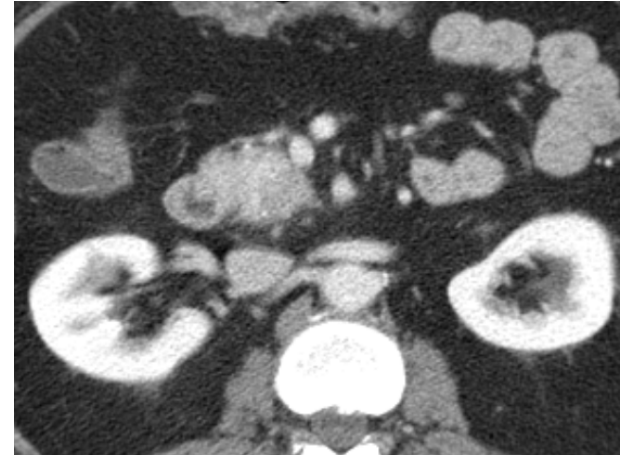
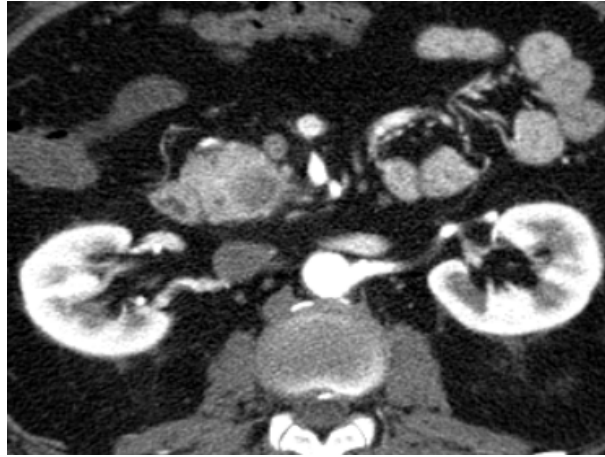
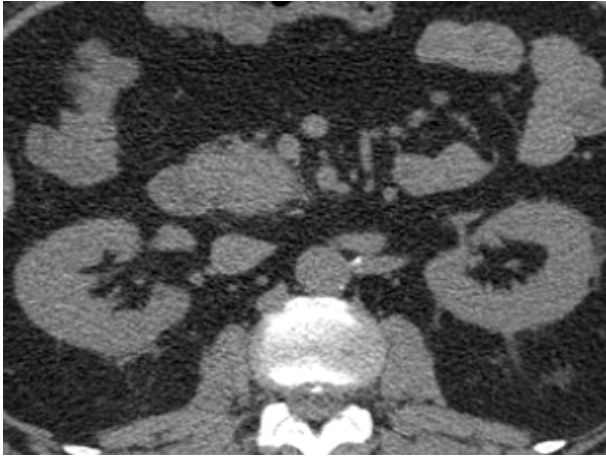
- > 2 cm 100 %
- < 2 cm 60-77 %

- *Pauls S et al., Rontgenpraxis 2003*
- *Bronstein YL et al., Am J Roentgenol 2004*

Our experience

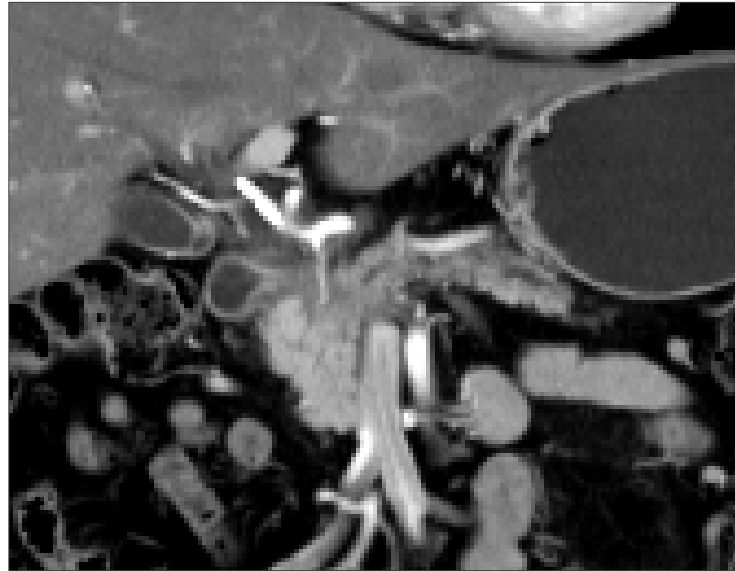
- > 1 cm ~100 %
- < 1 cm challenging problem

Contrast tumor-parenchyma



Parenchymal phase best

Contrast tumor-parenchyma

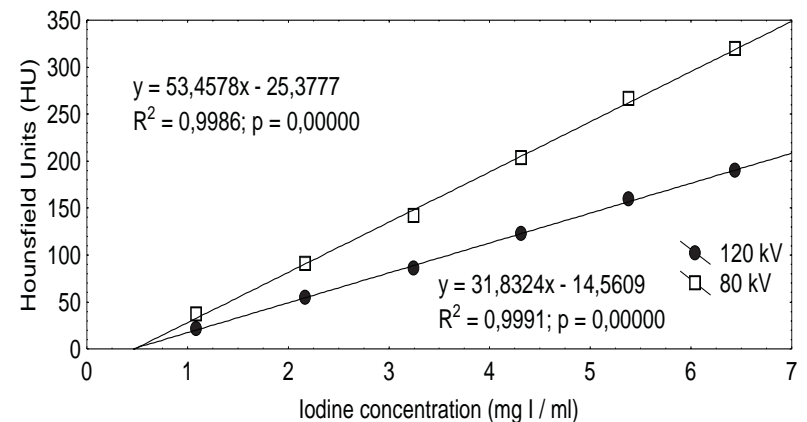


Sometimes hard to detect and stage

- CT 120 kV
 - ✓Parenchyma 130 HU
 - ✓Lesions 110 HU

} 20 HU
- CT 80 kV
 - ✓Parenchyma 219 HU
 - ✓Lesions 185 HU

} 34 HU



Aim

Does the decrease of tube voltage, from 120 kV to 80 kV, improve the detection of small hypovascularized pancreatic tumors?

Method and materials



Catphan® 600 phantom
64 channel MDCT GE LightSpeed VCT

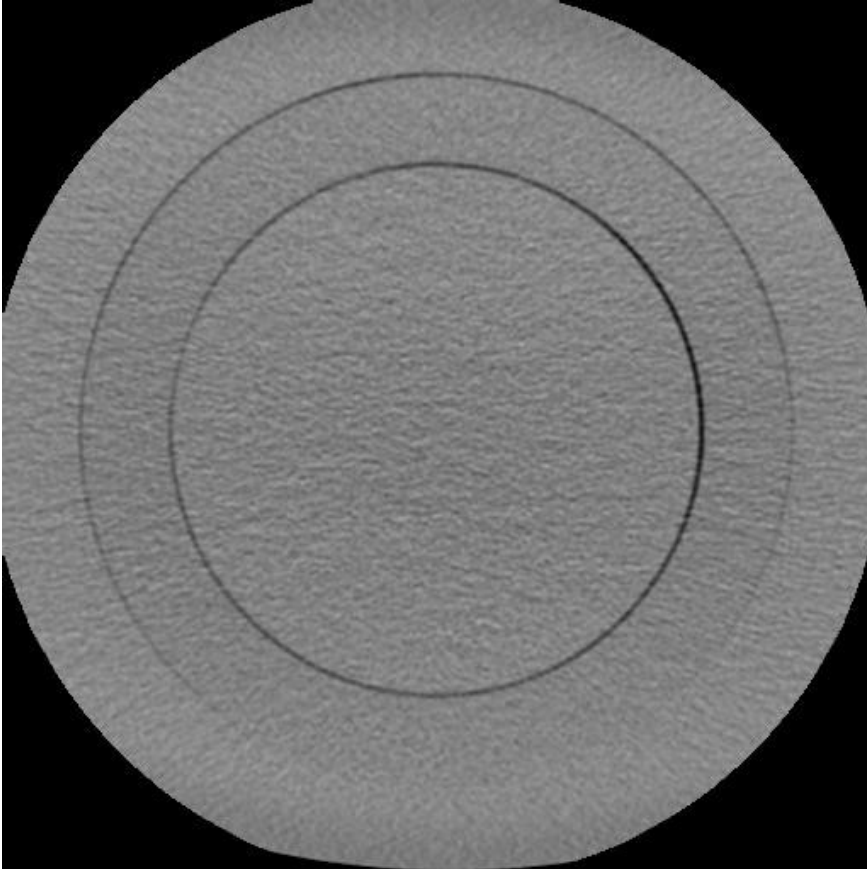
Standard protocol A

- Tube voltage: 120kV
- Tube current: 160mA
- Radiation dose: 15mGy
- Noise: 15 HU
- Rotation time: 0,6 s
- Slice collimation: 0,625mm
- Slice thickness: 3 mm
- Increment: 1,5 mm

Method and materials

Protocol	Tube voltage [kV]	Tube Current [mA]	CTDIvol [mGy]	Noise [HU]
A Standard	120	160	15	15
B Same dose	80	500	15	17
C Same noise	80	675	20	15

Method and materials



- **100 cases:**

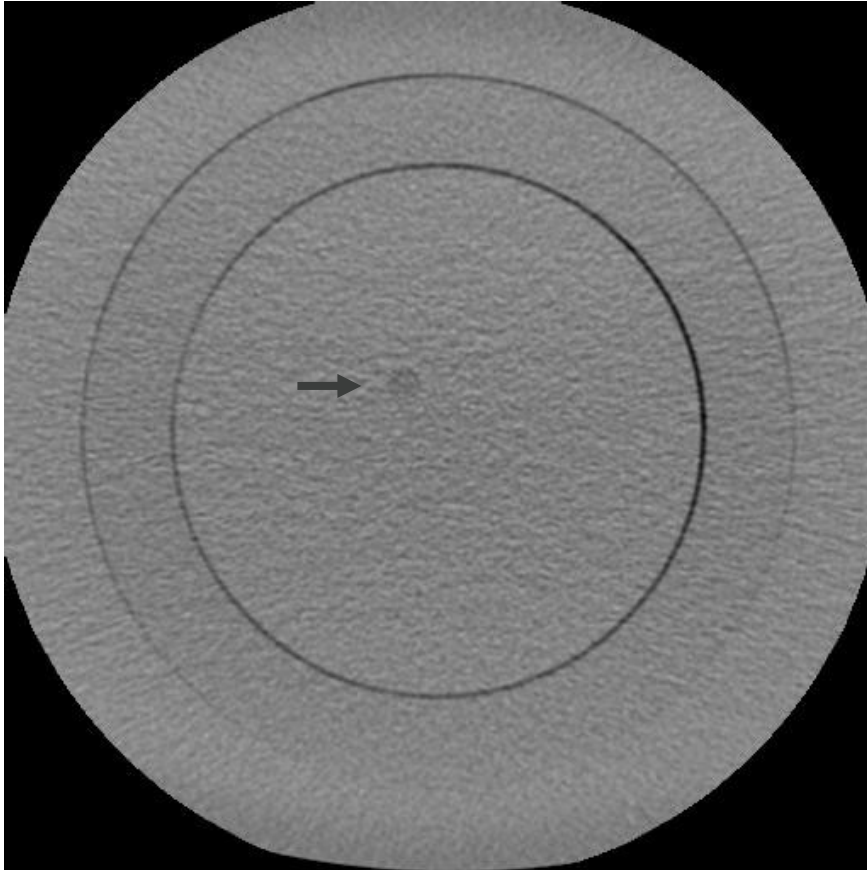
- ✓ 57 cases 1-3 spherical lesions
- ✓ 2-10 mm diameter

- **3 readers:**

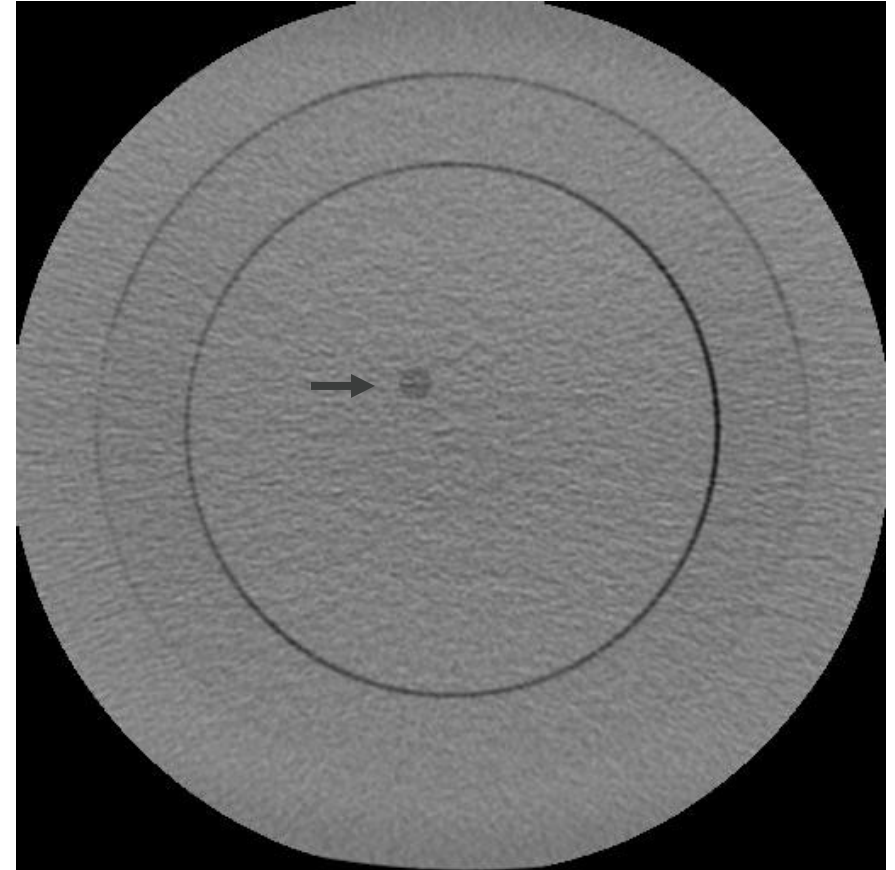
- ✓ fixed & free window settings

Method and materials

10 mm lesion



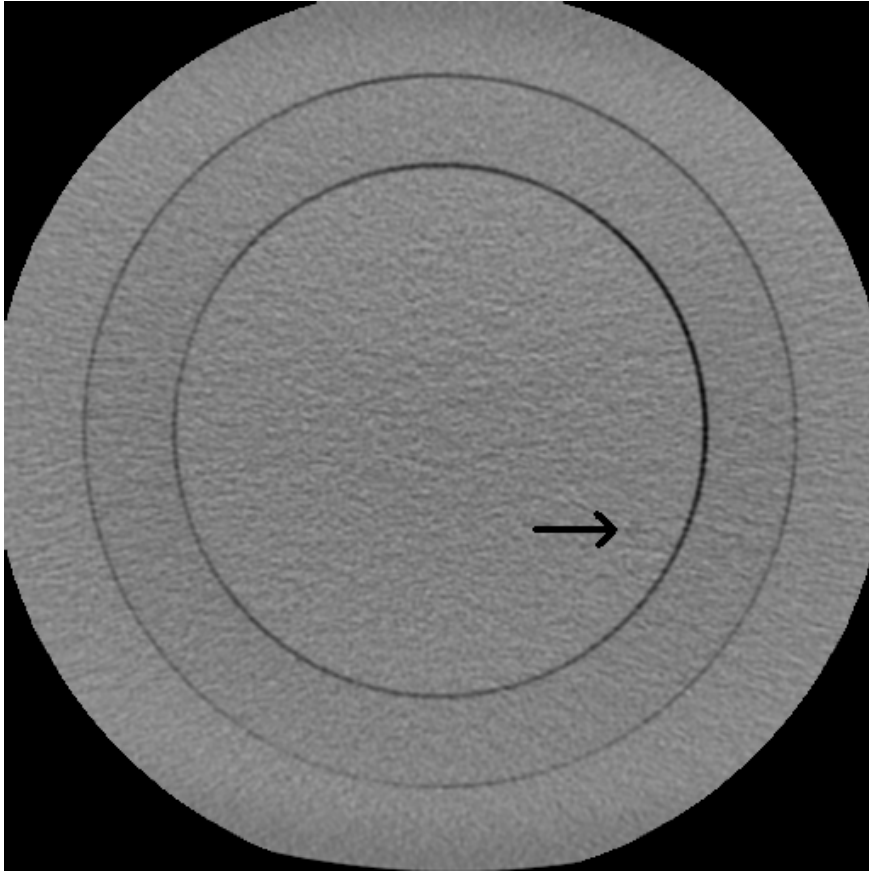
120kV



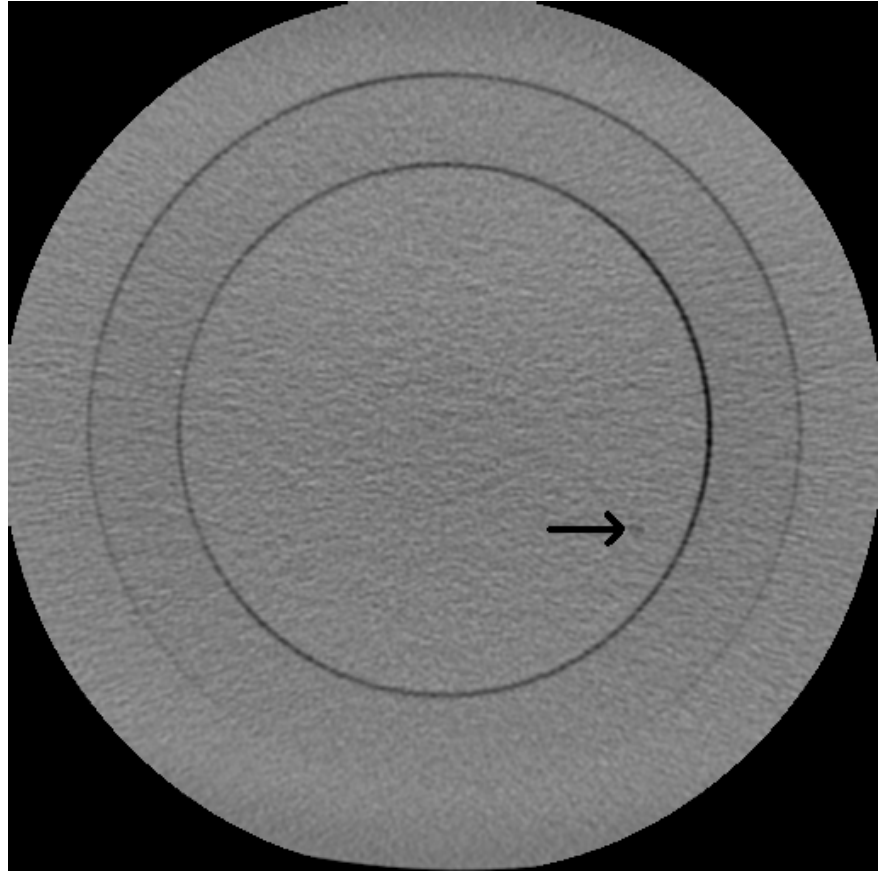
80kV

Method and materials

5 mm lesion

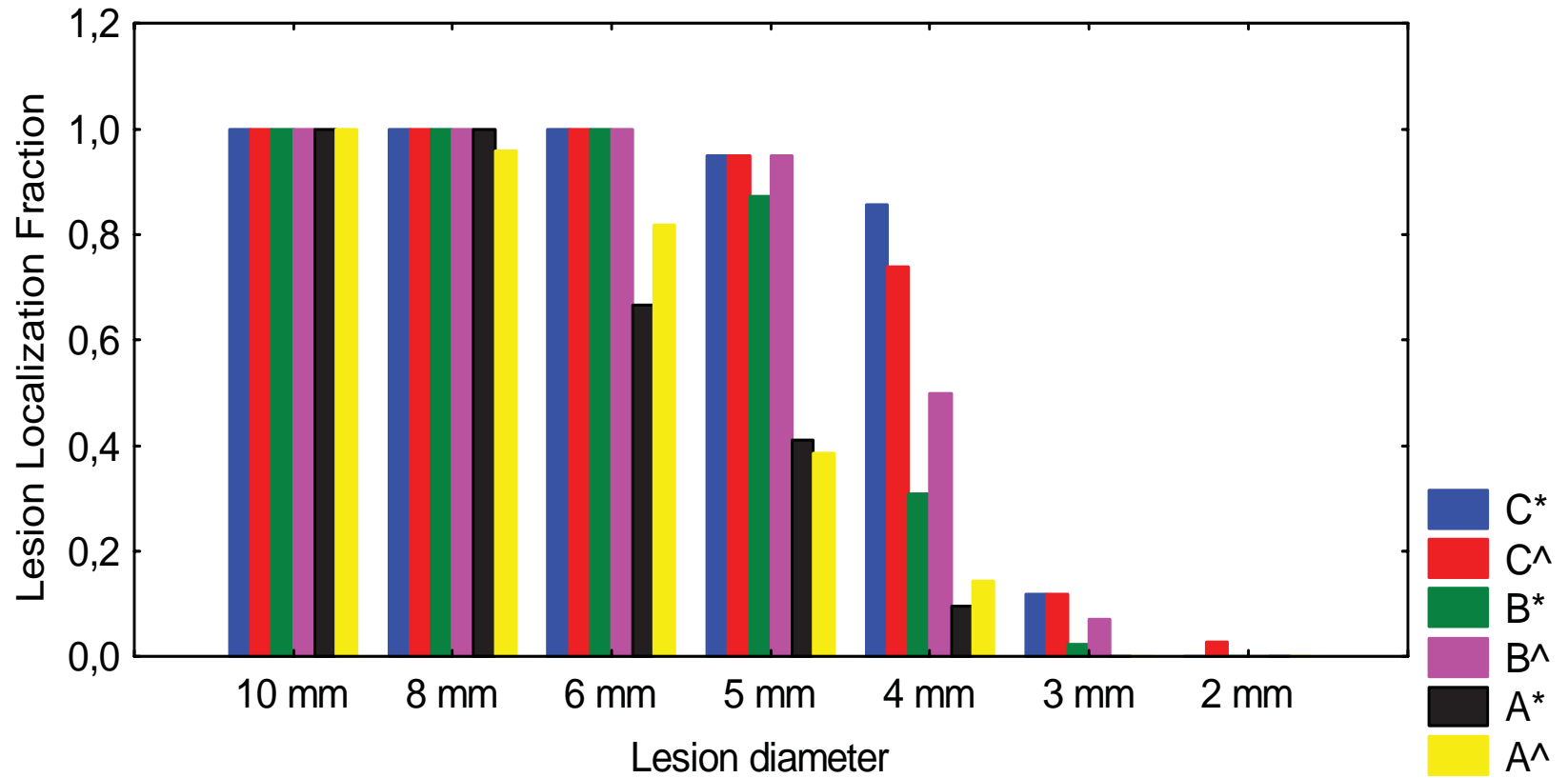


120kV



80kV

Results



^fixed window setting
*free window setting

Results

Figure of merit (FOM) for each reader and scanning protocol

Reader	Fixed window			Free window		
	A [^] Standard	B [^] Same dose	C [^] Same noise	A [*] Standard	B [*] Same dose	C [*] Same noise
1	0,72	0,78	0,84	0,71	0,77	0,83
2	0,74	0,79	0,84	0,70	0,81	0,84
3	0,68	0,83	0,83	0,72	0,84	0,88
Average	0,71	0,80	0,84	0,71	0,81	0,85

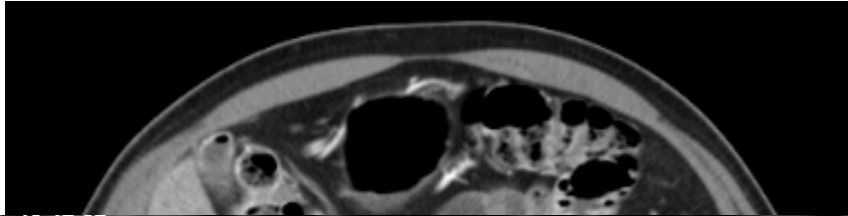
- a significant better lesion detection at 80 than at 120 kV
- similar lesion detection using 500 and 675 mA tube current at 80 kV
- similar lesion detection using fixed and free window setting

Conclusion

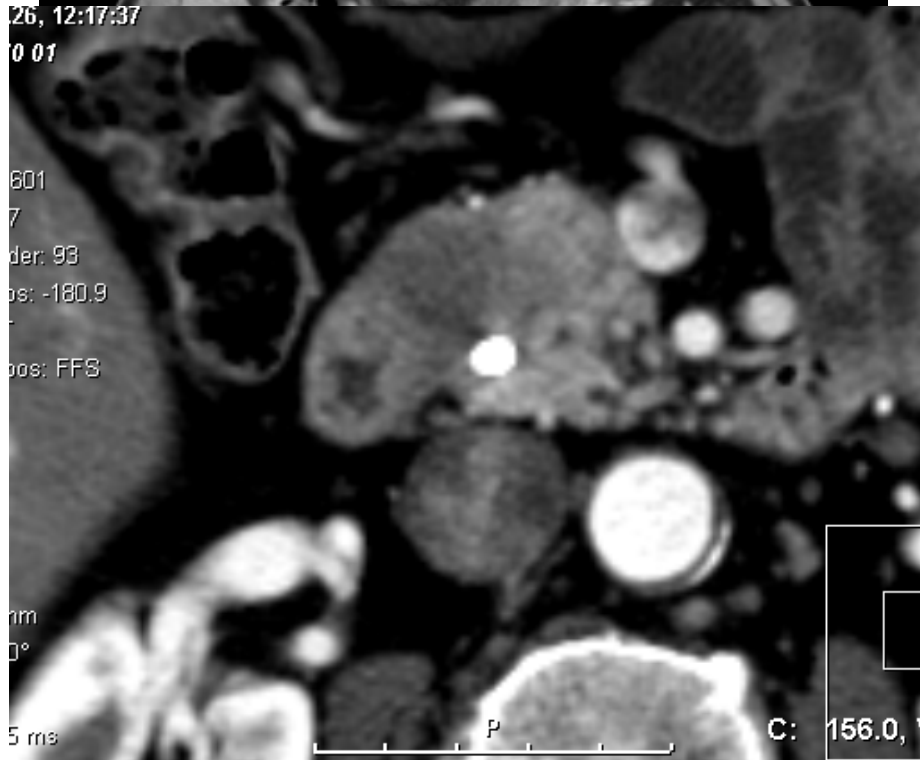
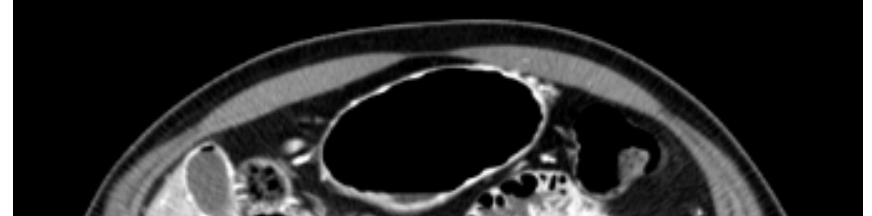
**By decreasing the tube voltage
from 120 kV to 80 kV
more and smaller digital hypodense tumors
can be detected**

The next step ...

120kV



80kV



120kV



80kV



Thank you!

