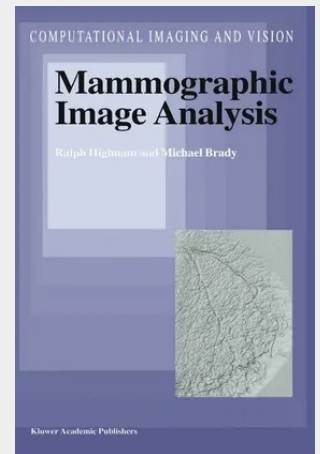


Mammographic Image Analysis

Breast cancer is a major health problem in the Western world, where it is the most common cancer among women. Approximately 1 in 12 women will develop breast cancer during the course of their lives. Over the past twenty years there have been a series of major advances in the management of women with breast cancer, ranging from novel chemotherapy and radiotherapy treatments to conservative surgery. The next twenty years are likely to see computerized image analysis playing an increasingly important role in patient management. As applications of image analysis go, medical applications are tough in general, and breast cancer image analysis is one of the toughest. There are many reasons for this: highly variable and irregular shapes of the objects of interest, changing imaging conditions, and the densely textured nature of the images. Add to this the increasing need for quantitative information, precision, and reliability (very few false positives), and the image processing challenge becomes quite daunting, in fact it pushes image analysis techniques right to their limits.

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53,49 €

49,99 € (zzgl. MwSt.)

Lieferfrist: bis zu 10 Tage

Artikelnummer: 9789401059497

Medium: Buch

ISBN: 978-94-010-5949-7

Verlag: Springer

Erscheinungstermin: 14.10.2012

Sprache(n): Englisch

Auflage: 1. Auflage 2012

Serie: Computational Imaging and Vision

Produktform: Kartoniert

Gewicht: 631 g

Seiten: 379

Format (B x H): 160 x 240 mm

