

# Questions and Answers About Having a Mammogram

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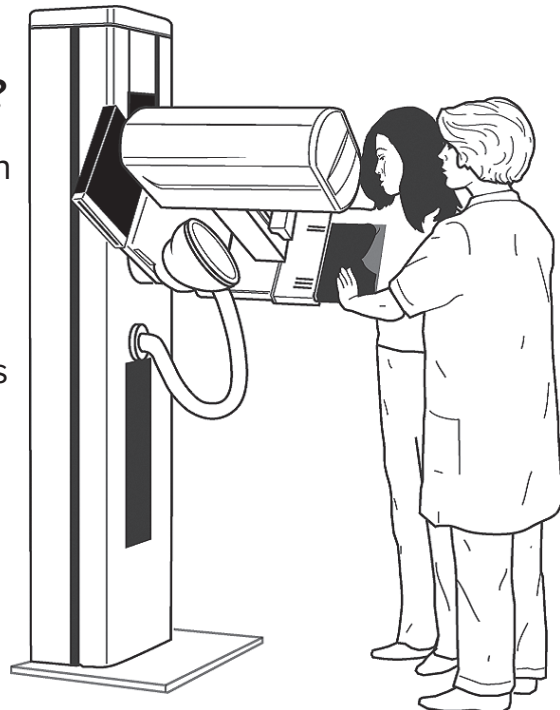
## Why do I need a Mammogram?

The best way to find breast cancer early is to have regular mammograms. A mammogram is an x-ray of the inside of the breast. This proven method of imaging the breast can show small breast abnormalities before they can be felt. Talk to your doctor about how often you should have a mammogram.

## Why is the Mammogram done using compression (squeezing)?

A mammogram requires compression of the breast while the technologist takes the x-ray images. The use of compression:

- Prevents movement and produces the best quality images
- Allows better view of the entire structure of the breast
- Reduces x-ray exposure



## Does compression cause damage to my breast?

Some patients have a change in the skin color of one or both breasts. The change is temporary and will go away by itself in a few days.

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**This handout is for informational purposes only. Talk with your doctor or health care team if you have any questions about your care.**

## **Will my breasts hurt after the Mammogram?**

There may be a mild aching after the mammogram as a result of the compression. This discomfort is temporary. You can take aspirin or Tylenol if the discomfort bothers you. Follow the directions on the label.

## **What can I expect after the exam?**

Radiologists, who are specially trained to read mammograms, will interpret your x-rays. The results will be reported to you and your doctor. Sometimes more views are needed. This does not necessarily mean you have cancer. You will be contacted if more testing is needed.

## **What is the difference between a Screening Mammogram and a Diagnostic Mammogram?**

Mammograms can be used to check for breast cancer in women who have no signs or symptoms of the disease. This type of mammogram is called a **screening mammogram**. Screening mammograms usually involve two x-rays of each breast. They make it possible to detect tumors that cannot be felt. Screening mammograms can also find microcalcifications (tiny deposits of calcium) which may be a sign of cancer.

Mammograms are also used to check for breast cancer after a lump or other sign or symptom of breast cancer has been found. This type of mammogram is called a diagnostic mammogram. A diagnostic mammogram may also be performed on individuals with a history of breast cancer. Diagnostic mammograms take longer than screening mammograms because they involve more x-rays to obtain views of the breast from several angles. The technician may magnify a certain area to get a detailed picture that can help the doctor better evaluate the changes in your breast.

## **Will insurance pay for my mammogram?**

Mammograms are covered by most insurance plans. You will need to call your insurance company for information about your policy.

## **If I have a Mammogram, do I still need to do breast-self exams?**

Yes, early detection is one of the best defenses against breast cancer. The earlier the disease is detected, the better the outcome.

- To schedule a mammogram, call (614) 293-4455 or (800) 240-4477.
- If you have questions about mammography call the JamesLine at (800) 293-5066.