

Questions and Answers About Having a Mammogram

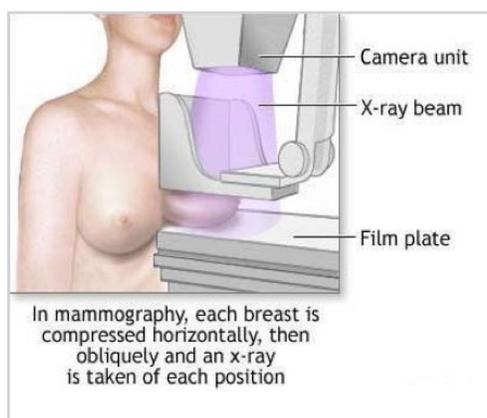
Why do I need a Mammogram?

Breast cancer is a disease that affects the lives of many women (lifetime risk is 1 in 7). A mammogram is a series of x-rays of the inside of the breast. It is the only proven method of imaging the breast that can reveal 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. Compression during a mammogram:

- 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 experience a change in skin color to one or both breasts. The color change is temporary and will go away by itself in a few days.

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 buffered Advil 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 films. The results will be reported to you and your doctor. Sometimes additional views are requested to clarify details. This does not necessarily mean you have cancer. If more testing is needed, you will be notified by mail about follow-up.

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

Yes, the American Cancer Society recommends monthly breast self-exams for women over the age of 20. Early detection is one of the best defenses against breast cancer.

The earlier the disease is detected, the better the outcome.