



What is a Mammography?

A Mammogram is a safe, low-dose x-ray picture of the breast that allows early detection of breast cancer. In a screening mammogram, images are taken at two angles for each breast. A diagnostic mammogram, which requires additional angles, is conducted when something of concern is found on the original screening mammogram, or for special circumstances such as breast implants.

What can I expect?

You will be positioned in front of a special x-ray machine. Each of your breasts will be pressed momentarily between an adjustable platform and a clear plate. Pressure is necessary to flatten the breast in order to get the clearest picture. The entire exam typically takes about 10-15 minutes.

What is Digital Mammography?

Digital mammography, also called full-field digital mammography (FFDM), is a mammography system in which the x-ray film is replaced by solid-state detectors that convert x-rays into electrical signals. These detectors are similar to those found in digital cameras. The electrical signals are used to produce images of the breast that can be seen on a computer screen or printed on special film similar to conventional mammograms. From the patient's point of view, having a digital mammogram is essentially the same as having a conventional film screen mammogram.

What is CAD?

Computer-aided detection (CAD) systems make a digitized mammographic image from either a conventional film mammogram or a digitally acquired mammogram. The computer software then searches for abnormal areas of density, mass, or calcification that may indicate the presence of cancer.

With CAD systems, radiologists have a means to overcome the known limitations of human interpretation of mammograms. Studies have shown that CAD significantly increases radiologist sensitivity for the detection of breast cancer.