

# Mammograms

A Mammogram is a type of exam that uses low-dose X-ray to image the soft tissue of the breast. The images are then reviewed by a radiologist to allow identification of various benign or malignant areas. Mammograms are recommended every year for women forty years old and over and play a vital role in the early detection of breast cancers. Mammograms can show changes in the breast up to two years before a patient or physician can feel them. Early detection is a key element in the successful treatment of breast cancer. If there is any possibility of pregnancy, this must be discussed with your physician BEFORE exam is scheduled.

To prepare for a mammogram you should:

- Make every effort to obtain prior mammogram films and have them available at the current exam for comparison.
- Do not wear deodorant, lotion, or talcum powder under your arms or your breasts the day of the exam. These can appear as artifacts on the x-ray film.
- For your comfort try to schedule the exam for the week following your period.
- Notify your doctor of any problems or new findings in your breasts prior to the exam as this may result in changing the way the exam is performed.
- Make sure it has been a full year since your last mammogram for insurance purposes – unless you are having a problem that requires a diagnostic appointment. Signs that you may need this type of exam would be nipple discharge, inverted nipple(s), dimpling of the skin on the breast, a lump, or persistent breast pain.
- Tell the office when scheduling if you have had breast augmentation.
- Please call if you cannot make it to your appointment.

Following the exam a radiologist will dictate a report, which will be sent to your referring physician. You will receive notification by mail of your results. Occasionally, an area of concern is found and you will be asked to return for further diagnostic studies. Please contact your physician with any questions regarding this letter or to schedule a follow-up appointment.