

Digital Mammography

Appointment Information

Date: _____ Time: _____ Location: _____

Address: _____

Notes: _____

About

Digital mammography exams are performed to detect abnormalities in the breasts. Digital mammography is a 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 breasts that can be seen on a computer screen or printed on film similar to mammograms you may have had in the past.

The patient experience during a digital mammography is the same as regular mammography. The computer aided detection of digital mammography allows radiologists to view clearer images of the breasts. Digital mammography can improve detection of breast cancer in some women. The digital technology available through digital mammography allows for more computerized analysis of a breast exam than was possible with film mammography. Digital mammography also benefits younger women with dense breast tissue, when density sometimes makes it harder to detect tumors.

Preparations

On the day of your digital mammography exam, you will need to undress from the waist up so a two-piece outfit is recommended. Do not wear deodorant, talcum powder, perfume or lotion under your arms or on your breasts on the day of your exam. These can sometimes show on the images.

You will experience slight pressure on the breasts during the exam. If you experience patterns of sensitivity in the breasts, for example around the time of your period, you might want to schedule your mammogram when your breasts are least sensitive. Some women ask if they can get a routine mammogram if they have breast implants. The answer is usually yes. Radiologists are experienced in working with women who have implants and can always help you with that question. The techniques to get good images if you have implants sometimes take a little longer so be sure to let your radiologist know ahead of time if you have implants.

You should continue your diet and medications as usual. Be sure to let your radiologist know if you are pregnant or could possibly be pregnant.