

Important Information About Your Mammogram

A mammogram is a special type of x-ray exam used to create detailed images of the breast. Mammography uses low dose x-rays and an x-ray system designed specifically for imaging the breasts. Mammography plays a major role in early detection of breast cancers, which in turn, increases the chances of successful treatment and survival.

SCREENING MAMMOGRAMS are used to check for breast cancer or other abnormalities in women who have no signs or symptoms of disease. This is typically done once a year in women 40 years of age and older.

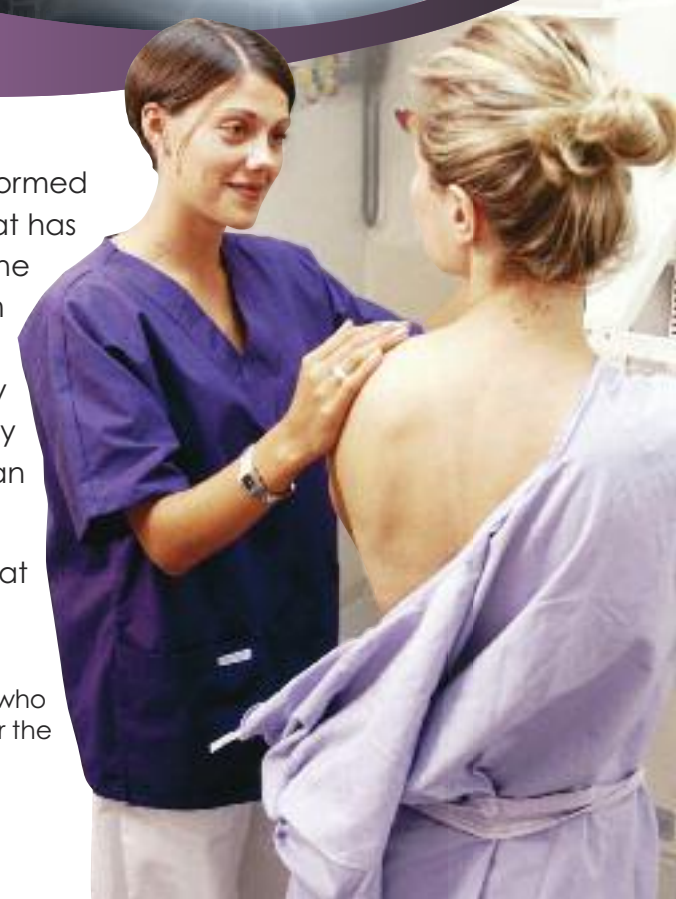
DIAGNOSTIC MAMMOGRAMS

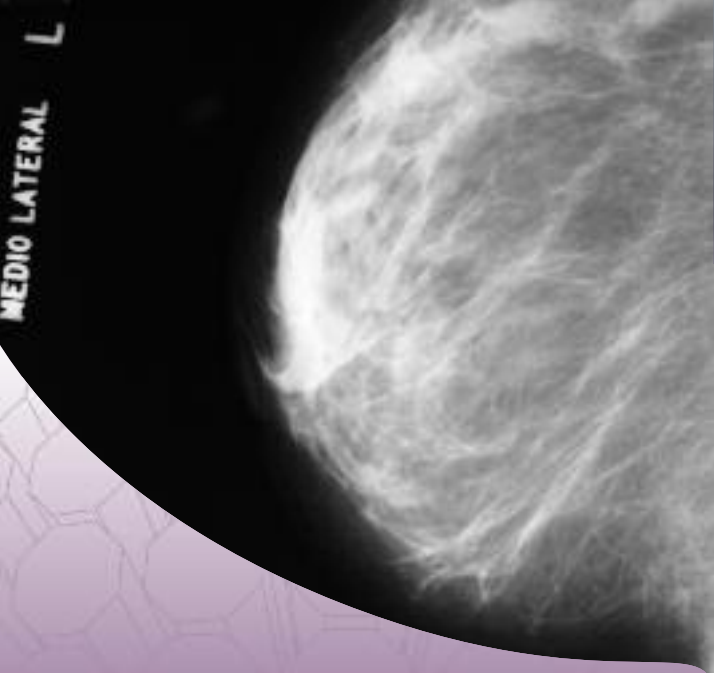
performed when a screening mammogram shows an area within the breast that has an unusual or abnormal appearance and the radiologist determines that the area needs to be more closely evaluated. A patient will receive a letter or call from the radiology department instructing them to come in for a "diagnostic mammogram".

Diagnostic mammograms take a little longer than screening mammograms because they involve multiple views of the breast taken from several angles. The mammographer may magnify the suspicious area to produce a highly detailed image that can help the radiologist make an accurate diagnosis.

Diagnostic mammography is also recommended for women who are experiencing symptoms that may be related to breast cancer, such as:

- A lump that can be felt by the patient or her doctor in the breast or under the arm
- Skin changes, such as redness, dimpling or thickening
- Nipple changes, such as inversion, retraction, erosion, weeping and itching
- An area of thickening
- Spontaneous nipple discharge
- A change in breast size
- Recommended for women who have had a lumpectomy for the first seven years following radiation therapy.





DIAGNOSTIC MAMMOGRAMS (cont.)

In some cases, a radiologist may determine that an ultrasound of the breast be performed to further evaluate the area of concern. In some cases, a biopsy may need to be performed as well.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

If you are contacted by radiology and asked to come in for a diagnostic mammogram or ultrasound, it does NOT always mean that we have found breast cancer! In many cases, the diagnostic mammogram reveals the area of concern to be a cyst, scarring, fibrous tissue, or other benign (non-cancerous) conditions. The radiologist will communicate his report directly to your doctor. Your doctor will then contact you and explain the results in detail and answer any of your questions. If you do not hear from your doctor within a reasonable amount of time, please call his/her office and make arrangements to receive the results.



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