

MAMMOGRAPHY

A mammogram is an x-ray of the breast utilized to detect breast cancer, as well as to diagnose lumps felt by the patient and/or Physician.

All mammography is performed in accordance with the Mammography Quality Standards Act (MQSA) regulations.

This procedure can only be performed by a licensed radiology technologist who is certified to perform mammography.

CONTRAINDICATIONS:

Low doses of radiation are emitted during the procedure. Therefore, screening exams on pregnant patients are discouraged and will be deferred until after delivery. If it is imperative that a woman obtain a mammogram during pregnancy, all potential radiation risks to the fetus and clinical benefits of the procedure must be explained in detail by the Supervising Radiologist.

Women with breast implants will be presented with a consent form noting the small risk of implant rupture.

PATIENT INSTRUCTIONS:

On the day of the exam women should refrain from wearing any powder, creams and/or lotions.

ORDERING PROCESS:

Patients may self-refer for annual screening mammograms.

All diagnostic studies are performed as ordered by a Physician and/or Midlevel Provider.

EXAM RESULTS:

Reports follow the FDA-approved final assessment categories defined in the ACR Breast Imaging Reporting and Data System (BI-RADS Atlas).

1. **BIRADS 0 – Incomplete:** Need additional imaging evaluation and/or prior mammograms for comparison.
2. **BIRADS 1 – Negative:** There is nothing to comment on. The breasts are symmetric and no masses, architectural distortion or suspicious calcifications are present.
3. **BIRADS 2 – Benign Finding(s):** A “normal” assessment utilized when describing one or more specific benign mammographic findings in the report.

4. **BIRADS 3 – Probably Benign Finding:** Initial short-interval follow-up suggested.
5. **BIRADS 4 – Suspicious Abnormality:** Biopsy should be considered.
6. **BIRADS 5 – Highly Suggestive of Malignancy:** Almost certainly malignant.

EXAM RESULTS:

A dictated report of the mammography examination will be provided to the patient's Ordering Provider as soon as possible, but no later than 30 days from the date of the mammography examination.

The Imaging Center will make reasonable attempts to communicate with the healthcare provider as soon as possible, if the assessment is "suspicious" or "highly suggestive of malignancy".

Written Communication to Patients:

Each patient will receive a letter stating the results of their mammogram. If an assessment is "suspicious" or "highly suggestive of malignancy", the Imaging Center shall make reasonable attempts to ensure that the results are communicated to the patient as soon as possible.

Patients will receive notification letters for their annual screening mammogram as well as for short interval follow-up exams.

PATIENT FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY:

Patients will be presented with an Advanced Beneficiary Notice at the time of their visit indicating their financial responsibility if the study is not covered by their insurance carrier. The ABN will be maintained as part of the patient's medical record.

Medicare Frequency Limitations:

Screening Mammograms

The procedure is covered for routine screening annually for women over 40. For women 35-39, a baseline mammogram is allowed once during this period. Some insurance plans may not cover a screening mammogram for women under the age of 35. These patients will be instructed to contact their insurance directly to understand their coverage prior to the time of the scheduled exam.

Screening mammograms do not require an order from a physician or qualified non-physician practitioner. Patients can self-refer for this exam.

Diagnostic Mammograms

Must be ordered by a physician or qualified non-physician practitioner and are covered as often as is medically necessary.

HOURS OF OPERATION:

Eastside Imaging:

Exams are performed on a scheduled appointment basis, Monday through Friday, 7:15 am – 4:30 pm. Diagnostic exams are only performed when a Radiologist is on the premises (Tuesday through Friday 8:00 am – 5:00 pm).

Northwest Imaging:

Exams are performed on a scheduled appointment basis, Monday through Thursday, 7:30 am – 5:30 pm. Diagnostic exams requiring an ultrasound are performed on Mondays.

