

Diagnostic Mammogram

What is a diagnostic mammogram?

A diagnostic mammogram is an X-ray exam of the breasts for women who have breast problems. You have already seen your doctor and had a breast exam in the office. Your symptoms may be pain, a lump, bloody nipple discharge and/or skin dimpling.

Before the exam

The place where you have your mammogram will need all X-ray films you have had done before. If you signed them out to a doctor or had them done elsewhere, you must bring them with you. They will be compared to your new film to look for any changes.

Do not use perfume, powder, or deodorant under your arms or in the breast area. (Bring them with you to put on after the exam if you wish.)

You will need to undress above the waist in the dressing room. You will be given a gown to wear.

About the exam

A female technologist will place your breasts between two plates. Each breast will be pressed between these plates. The X-ray will be quickly taken. You will feel some pressure that lasts only a few seconds.

When the breasts are pressed, it is easier to see possible problems in them. Also, less radiation is needed.

About the radiation

Very little radiation is needed to view your breasts. In fact, one mammogram gives off about as much radiation as an airplane flight from New York to California.

Reading the films

The radiologist (a medical doctor specializing in diagnostic radiology) will look at your films while you wait. More films or an ultrasound may be needed to complete the procedure. The radiologists will give you your results before you leave.

We will send a written report with the results of your exam to you and to your doctor.



When it matters most.

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