



### [Contact Us Today!](#)

A mammogram is an x-ray picture of the breasts that makes it possible to detect lumps or abnormal growths that may not be felt during a self-examination. Major risk factors of breast cancer include age, genetics, and breast density. The risk of developing breast cancer increases with age. After age 50, the [probability of developing breast cancer within 10 years is 1 in 43](#). Women who have a close relative who has had breast cancer are also at increased risk; about 5 to 10 percent of breast cancer cases result from gene mutations that are inherited. Women with dense breast tissue as seen by mammography, have a significantly increased risk compared to those without dense breasts.

Other important tools — such as breast self-exam, clinical breast examination, and possibly ultrasound or MRI — can and should be used as complementary tools, but there are no substitutes or replacements for a mammogram.

**Women should get a mammogram once a year beginning at age 40.**

If you're at high risk of breast cancer, have a strong family history of breast or ovarian cancer, or have had radiation treatment to the chest in the past, it's recommended that you start having annual mammograms at a younger age (often beginning around age 30).

## Important notes to remember

- **Mammograms can save your life.**

Finding breast cancer early reduces your risk of dying from the disease by 25-30% or more. Women should begin having mammograms yearly at age 40, or earlier if they're at high risk.

- **Don't be afraid.**

Mammography is a fast procedure (about 20 minutes), and discomfort is minimal for most women. The procedure is safe: there's only a very tiny amount of radiation exposure from a mammogram.

- **Get the best quality you can.**

If you have dense breasts or are under age 50, try to get a digital mammogram. A digital mammogram is recorded onto a computer so that doctors can enlarge certain sections to look at them more closely.

- **Bring your past mammogram films/results with you.**

If you've been to the same facility before, make sure your past results are available to whoever will be looking at your new results.

- **Be Consistent**

Once you find a facility you have confidence in, try to go there every year so that your mammograms can be compared from year to year.

- **Don't wear deodorant or antiperspirant to your mammogram**

Since these can show up on the film and interfere with the test results.



Self referrals to Diagnostic Radiology Services available for October only.