

Mammography is simply an X-ray examination of the breasts. Depending on each woman's particular need, the X-rays may be taken in a standing position or seated, and from different angles. Usually pictures are taken from at least two angles—top to bottom and side to side. Additional views may be ordered by the radiologist at the completion of the standard views. These are taken to clarify any indistinct areas or to see areas that were not visible in the original pictures and should not be a cause for alarm.



Mammograms can detect very small cancers that cannot yet be felt by hand examination. Gentle pressure is applied to the breast to flatten it somewhat. This pressure may be uncomfortable for some women but is of the greatest importance for producing high-quality pictures of the breast and surrounding tissues.

Since you will have to undress to the waist for the examination, it will be more convenient for you to wear a blouse and skirt or slacks. On the day of the exam, don't use any deodorant, perfume, powders, or ointments on your underarms or breasts. They can cloud the X-rays.

An illustration showing a woman with blonde hair, wearing a light blue hospital gown, standing in a mammography suite. A healthcare professional, a woman with dark hair, is adjusting the equipment on the woman's chest. The woman is looking towards the camera with a slight smile.

## WHEN TO HAVE A MAMMOGRAM

For all women, mammography is one of the best ways to screen for cancer. Give yourself the gift of regular mammograms, beginning with your first screening mammogram by the age of 40. If you're at greater risk, your doctor may recommend more frequent mammograms. If you notice any breast changes, see your doctor immediately.

Mammography Recommendations	
Age	Mammography
By age 40	First mammogram
40-49	Every 1 or 2 years as directed by your health care provider
50 and over	Every year