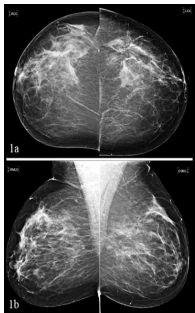


MAMMOGRAPHY EDUCATION

A mammogram is a type of test that uses a very low dose x-ray to look at breast tissue. This test is used to help find early breast problems. A mammogram can find changes long before you or your doctor can feel a change, such as a lump. Some mammograms are called **screening mammograms**, for patients who are symptom-free. **Diagnostic mammograms** are done when the patient has symptoms of breast disease. Research has shown that yearly mammograms can help find early cancers when they are most curable. It is felt that women should have a yearly mammogram starting at age 40. Women who have had breast cancer or those with a family member who had breast cancer may want to talk with their doctor about screening mammograms before age 40. At UNM Hospitals, our digital mammography program is accredited through the FDA (Food and Drug Administration) and the ACR (American College of Radiology).



At UNM Hospitals, only highly trained, certified and licensed technologists perform mammography.

Digital Mammogram image

GETTING READY FOR YOUR TEST

To get the best possible test, we ask that you **do not wear any deodorant, lotion or powder on your breasts or underarms on the day of your exam**. Please tell your tech if you are having any problems or symptoms before your exam or if you are currently breast feeding or have implants. **If possible, please bring your previous mammograms if they were done somewhere other than UNM Hospitals. You can also have them sent to us at the address on this brochure. Our doctor will want to look at your previous pictures. If you do not bring us your prior films, this could cause a delay in the reading of your current mammogram.**

HOW IS THE TEST DONE?

You will be taken to a dressing room and asked to undress from the waist up. You will be given a gown to wear. A technologist will take you to the examination room where your test will be done. You will be positioned next to the mammography unit. Your breast will be placed on a flat plate and a paddle will be used to hold your breast tissue during the pictures. This is called **compression** and it is very important. Compression is needed to spread out the breast so that all the tissue can be seen. By doing this, small abnormalities will not be able to hide behind other tissues. To get the best possible images, you will need to be very still and hold your breath for a few seconds while the pictures are being taken. You will be moved into several positions for your pictures. This is done so that all your breast tissue will be imaged. You will feel pressure on your breasts from

the compression. Some women experience discomfort. Be sure to tell your tech if you have a lot of pain due to the compression. We will do everything we can to help you with your test while giving your doctor the most complete exam possible. After your mammogram is finished, you may be asked to wait a few minutes while we make sure the test is good quality.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER MY MAMMOGRAM IS DONE?

A radiologist, a doctor who is trained to read radiology exams, will look at your mammogram pictures. The radiologist will send a written report with the results to the doctor who sent you for the test. We will mail you a letter with the results from your mammogram. If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact us for help.

MAMMOGRAM AND PREGNANCY

For our female patients, if you are or might be pregnant, tell the technologist before your exam.