Screening Mammogram

A screening mammogram evaluates breast tissue for any abnormalities, including cysts, other benign abnormalities and malignancy.

What to expect

- Before the exam:
  It is important that the imaging physician have any previous mammograms available for comparison when reading the current study. Patients should bring previous mammogram films with them on the day of exam. It is suggested that women do not schedule mammograms one week before their menstrual cycle (period) since breasts are usually very sensitive at this time. Patients should avoid wearing deodorant or talcum powder on the day of the exam.

- During the exam:
  Once in the exam room, two pictures of each breast are taken. The pictures are taken while applying pressure to the breast. Although the pressure may be uncomfortable, it is essential to obtain quality pictures. These exams take 20 to 30 minutes.

- After the exam:
  The imaging physician may call the patient back for additional pictures. There is no reason to worry should additional images be requested. Folds in breast tissue or blood vessels in the breast may require additional magnification (enlarged) views or ultrasound to clearly see all aspects of normal breast tissue.

Diagnostic Mammogram

A diagnostic mammogram is an X-ray of the breasts. The role of this procedure is to evaluate breast tissue for any unusual findings, including lumps (cysts or masses) that may have been felt by the patient or the physician or found on a routine screening mammogram.