

PREPARING FOR THE EXAM

Mammography is a specific type of imaging that uses a low-dose x-ray system for examination of the breasts. Mammography plays a central part in early detection of breast cancers because it can show changes in the breast up to two years before a patient or physician can feel them.

Before scheduling a mammogram, discuss any new findings or problems in your breasts with your doctor. In addition, inform your doctor of any prior surgeries, hormone use, and family or personal history of breast cancer.

The best time to schedule a mammogram is one week after your period. Always inform your doctor or x-ray technologist if there is any possibility that you are pregnant.

In addition, please consider the following:

- Do not wear deodorant, talcum powder, or lotion under your arms or on your breasts on the day of the exam. These may show up as calcium spots on the x-ray film.
- Describe any breast symptoms or problems to the technologist performing the exam.
- If possible, obtain prior mammograms and make them available to the radiologist at the time of the current exam.
- Ask when your results will be available; do not assume the results are normal if you do not hear from your doctor or HGH Radiology.
- Before the examination, you will be asked to remove all jewelry and clothing above the waist and you will be given a gown that opens in the front.

The exam will take about 30 minutes.

48 HR We will have your results back to your doctor within 48 hours.

Humboldt General Hospital provides state-of-the-art radiology services to men, women and children of all ages. Ensuring the most accurate diagnostic results is our goal. Services are performed in a timely and compassionate manner; meeting our patients' needs is our top priority.

Every member of Humboldt General Hospital's radiology team has achieved his or her registry through the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists (ARRT). Registration is the one-time process of initially recognizing individuals who have satisfied certain standards within a profession. A person is certified by the ARRT after meeting educational preparation standards, complying with ethics standards, and passing a comprehensive exam.

Clinical excellence is just one part of the department's three-pronged "Promise to the Community." Humboldt General Hospital's Radiology Department also is committed to premium customer service, offering extended evening and weekend hours, as well as the most advanced technology possible for its nine modalities: MRI, CT Scan, X-Ray, Fluoroscopy, Vascular Ultrasound, Obstetrical Ultrasound, Cardiac Ultrasound, Mammography and Bone Densitometry.

We look forward to serving you. Please call Humboldt General Hospital's Radiology Department at (775) 623-5222, ext. 133, with any questions or concerns you may have, or to schedule an appointment.

"OUR PROMISE TO YOU"

- ✓ CLINICAL EXCELLENCE
- ✓ PREMIUM CUSTOMER SERVICE
- ✓ ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY



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MAMMOGRAPHY



MAMMOGRAPHY

at Humboldt General Hospital



WHY GET A MAMMOGRAM?

Mammography is used to aid in the diagnosis of breast diseases in women. Screening mammography can assist your physician in the detection of disease even if you have no complaints or symptoms.

Initial mammographic images themselves are not always enough to determine the existence of a benign or malignant disease with certainty. If a finding or spot seems suspicious, your radiologist may recommend further diagnostic studies.

Diagnostic mammography is used to evaluate a patient with abnormal clinical findings, such as a breast lump or lumps, that have been found by the woman or her doctor. Diagnostic mammography may also be done after an abnormal screening mammography in order to determine the cause of the area of concern on the screening exam.

HOW IS MAMMO PERFORMED?

During mammography, a specially qualified radiological technologist will position you to image your breast. The breast is first placed on a special platform and compressed with a paddle (often made of clear Plexiglas or other plastic).

Breast compression is necessary in order to:

- Even out the breast thickness so that all of the

tissue can be visualized;

- Spread out the tissue so that small abnormalities won't be obscured by overlying breast tissue;
- Allow the use of a lower x-ray dose since a thinner amount of breast tissue is being imaged;
- Hold the breast still in order to eliminate blurring of the image caused by motion;
- Reduce x-ray scatter to increase sharpness of picture.

The technologist will go behind a glass shield while making the x-ray exposure, which will send a beam of x-rays through the breast to the film behind the plate, thus exposing the film.

You will be asked to change positions slightly between images. The routine views are a top-to-bottom view and a side view. The process is repeated for the other breast.

The examination process should take about half an



hour. When the mammography is completed you will be asked to wait until the technologist examines the images to determine if more are needed.

WHAT WILL I EXPERIENCE?

You will feel pressure on the breast as it is squeezed by the compressor. Some women with sensitive breasts may experience discomfort. If this is the case, schedule the procedure when your breasts are least tender. The technologist will apply compression in gradations. Be sure to inform the technologist if pain occurs as compression is increased. If discomfort is significant, less compression will be used.

ACS RECOMMENDATIONS:

The American Cancer Society recommends that:

Women over 40:

- Get an annual mammogram;
- Obtain an annual clinical breast exam by a healthcare professional;
- Perform monthly breast self-exams.

Women 20-39:

- Obtain a clinical breast exam by a healthcare professional every three years;
- Perform monthly breast self-exams.

JOIN OUR BIRTHDAY CLUB!

Humboldt General Hospital wants to help celebrate your commitment to wellness. Schedule your annual mammogram during your birthday month and give yourself the gift of life. We'll help celebrate by offering private pay patients a 50 percent discount. Plus, you'll get a special birthday treat, just for doing something good for yourself. Call HGH's Radiology Department today at (775) 623-5222, ext. 133, to make your appointment.