

Ask *the* Expert

What is involved in getting a mammogram?

When should I have my first mammogram?

The American Cancer Society suggests that all women should begin having yearly screening mammograms at age 40. The chance of having breast cancer increases in women age 40 and over.

Do I need a referral from my primary care or OBGYN physician? Do I need to make an appointment?

You do not have to have an order for a screening mammogram, as long as you are not experiencing any breast related problems. However, at the NEA Baptist Breast Imaging Center, you will need to have a primary physician or OBGYN, in which you are a known patient, to follow up on your results. It is best to have a physician's order, as well as, to schedule an appointment to ensure adequate time to discuss any concerns with our staff.

What happens during the mammogram? Is the mammogram painful?

Mammography provides a special x-ray of the breast tissue. During the exam, your breast will be under compression for approximately 45 seconds while a series of images are taken at various angles. The full exam will take less than 15 minutes and the images are immediately viewed by the technologist in order to ensure the images are adequate. The images are then read by the radiologist. Most women describe a mammogram as feeling "uncomfortable" or "pressure" on the breast. You may want to consider scheduling your mammogram the week after your menstrual cycle, when the breasts seem to be less tender. Our dedicated breast imaging specialists are all registered mammography technologists who are trained to provide you with the most comfortable positioning and a positive mammography experience.

What will you find or look for on a mammogram?

Mammography allows me to see internal structures

of the breast. I look for any suspicious areas within the breast tissue. These suspicious areas most commonly are new masses, microcalcifications and distortions. It is also important for me to compare any prior mammogram images you may have had to your current exam in order to detect any changes.

How long does it take to get the results?

Once your mammogram is read the results are immediately sent to your primary or ordering physician. We also follow up with every patient with a written letter explaining your screening results within 2-3 business days.

What is the next step if my mammogram is not normal?

If there is an area of concern on your screening mammogram, you will be contacted to schedule a second diagnostic mammogram and possibly an ultrasound to further evaluate the area of concern. Sometimes there is an area that is suspicious,

and a biopsy will be recommended.

I, as well as the nurse navigator, will consult with you and explain every step of the biopsy process. We feel it is important to be available and to provide all our patients adequate information regarding their recommended plan of treatment. The nurse navigator is a resource for all of our patients. She will provide you with a direct number to reach her throughout the biopsy process. However, we are both available to answer any questions or address any concerns you may have.

The nurse navigator is available to provide support to you from diagnosis through treatment. She is a resource to you, as well as a contact person. She is available to assist you by scheduling appointments, and coordinating them with one of our General Surgeons and Oncologists.

The Breast Imaging Center is located on the 1st floor at the clinic entrance of our new medical campus.



David Parish, MD
Breast Imaging Center

NEA BAPTIST 

Building Health Care Around You