



Frequently asked questions

What is a mammogram?

Mammography is an X-ray exam of your breast tissue. A mammogram can help find problems with your breasts, such as cysts or cancer.

What age should women get a mammogram?

While there are different recommendations, doctors and care teams at Ascension Saint Thomas support the recommendation of the American College of Radiology and Society of Breast Imaging - women should receive an annual mammogram starting at age 40. Most insurance providers cover a mammogram each year - either per plan year or every 365 days. Check with your insurance provider for more details on your coverage. If you are age 20 to 39 and notice any change in your breast tissue, call your doctor right away.

What happens during a mammogram?

You will need to undress from the waist up. The technologist will position your breast to get the clearest test results. Then, each of your breasts will be compressed one at a time. This helps get the most complete X-ray image. Your breasts will be repositioned to get at least two separate views of each breast.

What do mammograms detect?

A mammogram can help find problems with your breasts, such as cysts or cancer.

Do mammograms hurt?

You may find the pressure of the plates on your breasts to be uncomfortable or even painful. Timing your mammogram when your breasts are not tender is important. In premenopausal women, this is usually 1 week after your menstrual period. If you do have discomfort or pain, ask the technologist to reposition you to try to make it as painless as possible. Remember that each X-ray takes just a few moments and could help save your life.

How do I prepare for a mammogram?

Don't use deodorant, powder, or lotions on the day of your mammogram. It is also recommended to wear a top that is easy to remove, since you will be asked to undress from the waist up and wear a gown.

For more information contact

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