

Southernex



Imaging Group Ltd

June 2004

MAMMOGRAPHY

Patient Information

Mammograms or X-Rays of the breast are performed with dedicated equipment (mammography machine). This delivers a low dose of X-Rays to the breast and special films are used to give high definition breast images. Our machines are regularly checked by a medical physicist for quality assurance.

WHO SHOULD HAVE A MAMMOGRAM?

There are two applications of mammography - screening and diagnostic. Southernex provides both screening and diagnostic mammography

Diagnostic Mammography is for :

Women with breast symptoms- Lump, Thickening, Soreness, Nipple Discharge or a change in the appearance of the breast or nipple. Women who have no breast symptoms, but who have a family history of breast cancer, are also eligible for diagnostic mammography with a Medicare benefit.

Screening Mammography is for:

Women aged 40 or over who have no breast symptoms. Regular mammography in this age group has been shown to detect breast cancer in its early stages when treatment is more effective. Screening Mammography is recommended for all women aged 40 or over. This is recommended annually between the age of 40 and menopause. Thereafter the interval can be increased to two years but women who use HRT (Hormone Replacement Therapy) should continue to have an annual screening mammogram.

PREPARATION

There is no special preparation for a mammogram, but you should not use talcum powder or deodorant before your examination as these can appear on the mammogram. For your own comfort and convenience, it is a good idea to wear a skirt or slacks (not a dress) for this procedure.

PROCEDURE

The films are usually taken with the patient standing, resting against the machine.

The breast needs to be compressed to prevent movement and to reduce the thickness of the breast tissue. This helps to show the structures of the breast as clearly as possible. Films are taken in two or three different positions to display all parts of the breast.

There will be some discomfort during the compression of the breast. This may be painful but only for a very short time. Compressing the breast is essential to the success of the study. After the initial films are taken, they will be examined by the radiologist (a medical specialist trained to read X-Rays).

The radiologist may then ask for further films and an ultrasound examination. These will provide more information for discrepancies and you should not be alarmed if further films or an ultrasound is recommended.

COMPLICATIONS

On rare occasions, bruising may appear in the breast after the mammogram. If this occurs it is harmless and will settle very quickly.

ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES

When an abnormality is discovered on mammography or ultrasound (or both), it is helpful to take a small sample of cells or tissue to enable the pathologist to make a definite diagnosis. This is done by using a 'fine needle' which is inserted under ultrasound guidance into the breast. In other cases, a larger needle is used to take a small sample of tissue (a core biopsy). This requires local anaesthetic and a tiny incision in the skin to introduce the needle. If either of these procedures are needed, the radiologist will explain this to you at the time of examination.

For further enquiries about this procedure, contact our rooms at:

Aspley (07) 3263 5355

Caboolture (07) 5495 2077

Gympie (07) 5482 1196

Hervey Bay (07) 4124 3133

Indooroopilly (07) 3378 8033

Ipswich (07) 3812 8611

Maryborough (07) 4121 2767

Mt Ommaney (07) 3376 1500

Nambour (07) 5441 3677

Noosa Junction (07) 5447 2312

www.southernxray.com.au

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