

# Mammography

## Patient Education & Preparation Instructions

### What is Mammography?

Mammography is an x-ray examination of the breast. It is the most accurate method of detecting breast cancer when no symptoms exist. If you have a family history of breast cancer and/or if you are over the age of 35, your doctor may recommend a mammogram as part of your routine physical exam.

The examination is performed by a female registered radiology technologist, an expert in the safe operation of x-ray equipment. The results are interpreted by a radiologist, a physician specializing in x-ray diagnosis. The results will be sent to your physician, who will discuss them with you. You will also receive a letter from the hospital stating your results.

### Why Have a Mammogram?

American Cancer Society studies have found remarkable improvement in the quality and diagnostic accuracy of mammography.

Mammography can detect nonpalpable and small cancers, which may be too small to be detected by physical exam alone.

Mammography at Aspirus Riverview Hospital has been accredited by the American College of Radiology as well as for Medicare screening procedures. We follow American Cancer Society guidelines for symptom-free women with the latest breast imaging equipment. Further examination is performed if abnormalities are detected or if follow-up is required as a result of previous examination or surgery.

Most breast disease is not malignant or cancerous. If cancer is present, finding it early greatly improves the likelihood of successful treatment.

### How do I Prepare for My Mammogram?

1) Shower/bathe on the day of your mammogram.

2) After bathing, **do not** apply perfume, lotions, powders or preparations of any sort in the underarm area or on your breasts. *Residue left by these substances can produce misleading shadows or artifacts on your mammogram.*

3) Since it is necessary to undress to the waist, please dress appropriately.

If premenstrual discomfort and swelling in your breasts is a problem, schedule your appointment for the first week after your period.

**Note: Please bring your previous mammograms, if done at another facility, for comparison.**

### What Should I Expect?

The technologist will position your breast and compress it with a special device on the mammogram machine. The compression of the breast may produce some discomfort, but will only last a few seconds. As soon as the image is exposed, the compression will be released. The technologist will then position the breast in the other positions necessary to obtain a complete examination.

A minimum of two images of each breast will be taken. You will be asked to remain still and hold your breath for each image.

### **Why is Compression Needed?**

The breast is compressed during the mammographic examination in order to spread out the tissue so that abnormalities can be seen more readily. Some abnormalities may be hidden from view if the breast tissue is not compressed. The benefits of compression far outweigh the temporary discomfort produced by it.

### **How Long Will My Mammogram Take?**

The average mammogram takes approximately 20 minutes, but may take longer if additional films are needed.

### **How Important is My Appointment Time?**

In order to accommodate many patients, mammograms are scheduled every 20 minutes. To avoid appointment delays, pre-registration is required prior to your date of service. If you need to cancel your appointment, please notify Aspirus Riverview Hospital's Imaging Department as soon as possible.

**Aspirus Riverview Hospital's Imaging Services Department 715-421-7430**

### **PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED**

**Stop by the Registration Department in Aspirus Riverview Hospital's Lobby Rotunda  
Monday-Thursday 8 am-5:30 pm; Friday 8 am-5 pm; Or call 715-421-7499**

*If you are unable to keep your appointment, please let Aspirus Riverview Hospital's Imaging Services Department know as soon as possible. Should you be admitted to the hospital, please inform your physician about your appointment.*

Aspirus Riverview Hospital Mammography

*Accredited by the Committee on Mammography Accreditation of the Commission on Standards and Accreditation of the American College of Radiology Accredited for Medicare screening procedures.*

**Appointment Day:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Appointment Time:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Special Instructions:**



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