

# UNITED HOSPITAL CENTER PATIENT EDUCATION

## MAMMOGRAM



Your physician has referred you to Medbrook Medical Center or United Hospital Center's Diagnostic Services Department for a Mammogram. This exam is performed by a trained mammography technologist who is certified by the American Registry of Radiologic Technologist.

A mammogram is the x-ray study of the breasts. The low dose breast x-ray shows the breast's internal structure and allows both cancerous and non-cancerous growths to be identified at their earliest stages.

Your mammogram should be scheduled mid-cycle of your menstrual cycle. You are asked to **NOT** use any underarm deodorant, body powder, or lotion around your breasts before the exam. Some chemicals in these items could possibly show up as abnormalities on the films.

You will be asked to undress above the waist, therefore, it may be easier for you to wear a skirt or slacks and a blouse the day of the exam. Two views of each breast will be obtained from two different angles to give an overall view of the breasts. The first picture is usually taken from above. Your breast will be positioned on the film and a compression paddle will press firmly against the breast, flattening it. The second film is taken from the side of the breast and, again, a compression paddle will press firmly against the breast. The compression will be uncomfortable for most women, but it is **important** in Mammography for several reasons. It reduces the thickness of the breast, therefore reducing the amount of radiation used to produce the image. It also helps give a clearer image of the breast tissue and separates the structures that could possibly mimic an abnormality.

The mammography images will be interpreted by a radiologist at United Hospital Center. Sometimes, after viewing the initial images, the radiologist will request additional views. If that is necessary, the mammography technologist will call you and schedule an appointment so that these images can be performed as soon after the initial exam as possible.

If you have had a previous mammogram at any facility other than UHC or Medbrook, we request that you bring those films with you to your scheduled appointment. This will allow the radiologist to compare your present exam with any previous exam you have had.

**LENGTH:** Approximately 45 minutes

If you are pregnant, or think you might be, tell your doctor and the technologist **BEFORE** your exam.

**DISCLAIMER:** The content contained in this patient education is presented solely with the intent of providing public service information on health and health-related issues. This information is neither intended nor implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice. Always consult your physician or other qualified health provider prior to utilizing any of the information presented in this patient education. UHC makes no warranty, representation or guaranty as to the content, accuracy, timeliness or completeness of the information presented in this patient education or that the information may be relied upon for any reason.