



# What you need to know about mammograms

A mammogram is a low dose X-ray of the breast that allows radiologists (physicians specializing in imaging) to look for changes associated with breast cancer.

## How do I prepare for this test?

- At this time, we are practicing social distancing and encouraging all patients and visitors entering a Novant Health facility to wear a mask. If you do not have a mask, one can be provided.
- For patients who are on MyChart, you can e-check in and complete the breast questionnaire.
- You might find it easier to wear a skirt or pants. Then you only need to remove your top and bra for the mammogram.
- On the day of the exam, don't wear deodorant or antiperspirant. These can show up as white spots on the X-ray.
- If this is not your first mammogram, provide the name and place for where your last mammogram was taken. This allows us to compare your past images with new images. If you are able, please bring a disc of your prior mammograms from other facilities to your appointment.

## How is a screening mammogram done?

- A mammogram uses a machine that looks only at breast tissue. The machine takes X-rays at lower doses than other X-ray exams. Because these X-rays don't go through tissue easily, the machine has two plates that compress, or flatten, the breast to spread the tissue apart.

## How long does it take?

- Plan to be in the procedure room for about 15 minutes. The actual breast compression only lasts a few seconds each time. Allow time for parking, check in, undressing, questions and check-out.

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To learn more, visit [NovantHealth.org/imaging](https://www.novanthealth.org/imaging)



### How much does it cost?

- Most insurance covers the costs of screening mammography.
- If you do not have insurance coverage, do not allow the cost to keep you from getting a mammogram. We have payment options and grants for patients who qualify.

### Will it hurt?

- You might feel some discomfort when your breasts are compressed. Tell the technologist if you are uncomfortable.

### Why should I get a mammogram every year?

- Novant Health recommends yearly screening mammograms starting at age 40, based on the benefits of early detection. If you are younger than 40 and have a higher risk of breast cancer due to your medical or family history, discuss with your healthcare provider.
- Annual screening leads to early breast cancer diagnosis, which provides a better chance of survival.

### When will I get my results?

- If you have received a mammogram at a Novant Health location, you can expect results back in a week or less. However, if you had a previous mammogram at a location other than Novant Health, you can expect the results within 30 days after we review. Discuss the timeline for receiving your results with your provider.

### What happens if I am contacted for further imaging?

- You'll likely get another mammogram called a diagnostic mammogram and/or ultrasound. A diagnostic mammogram is done just like a screening mammogram, but more pictures are taken so that any areas of concern can be looked at more closely.
- If there is an abnormal finding, your radiologist may recommend other imaging procedures.
- These results are shared immediately after your diagnostic mammogram or ultrasound.

### How can I schedule my mammogram?

- For the Charlotte area, call 704-384-7226.
- For the Winston-Salem area, call 336-397-6704.
- For the Brunswick area, call 910-721-1485.
- For Novant Health UVA Health System Culpeper Medical Center, call 540-829-4100.
- Log in to MyChart and request an appointment.

Sources: American Cancer Society and Novant Health