

# MAMMOGRAMS STEP BY STEP:

Scheduling Through Results

**MAMMOGRAPHY HAS BEEN SHOWN TO REDUCE BREAST CANCER MORTALITY BY 30-50%**

Primary care providers recommend that women receive a mammogram as they grow older and their risk of breast cancer increases. Mammograms are widely used because they can detect tumors before they can be felt and often before they spread.

Despite the recommendation many women avoid this very simple diagnostic exam. Education can promote prevention and wellness behaviors, and knowing what to expect can decrease the fear and stress associated with these exams. Family Nurse Practitioners are in an ideal position to integrate the scheduling of a mammogram screening into annual visits.

## SCHEDULING



**WHO**  
Dependent on risk, age, and primary care provider



**WHERE**  
FDA certified facility



**WHEN**  
Typically biennially, mid-cycle, or right after menstruation

## THE DAY OF THE EXAM

### PREPARATION

#### Do Not Wear

- Perfumes
- Deodorants
- Lotions



These interfere with the scanning equipment.

#### Do Wear

- A two-piece outfit



Exams require removing your shirt and bra.

### CHECK-IN

The check-in process is the same as other routine procedures. You will be asked to provide insurance information to pay for the mammogram. Most insurance providers, either public or private, cover such exams in full. If you're not fully insured, check with your primary care provider to see if you qualify for state assistance programs.

#### Your Technician Will

- Provide a gown that opens in the front.
- Ask questions to enable proper image capturing.

### THE EXAM

**4 scans, 2 of each breast**

- Covers from the breastbone to the armpit
- Captures horizontal and vertical views



#### To Scan, the Technician Will

- Place your breast upon a plate. Be aware the plate may be cool to the touch.
- Lower another plate to flatten your breast.
- Step out of the room or behind a shield to take the images.

#### Post-Scan the Technician Will

- Analyze the images and confirm clear results with you.
- Possibly take more images if scans are unclear.
- Consult a radiologist if necessary.



#### During the Scan You Should

- Lean as close as possible into the area that the technician occupies.
- Stay very still.
- Hold your breath when requested.
- Know that the discomfort from pressure on the breast won't last long.

#### Post-Scan You Should

- Wait for the technician to tell you that you are done.
- Wait for the results, which may take numerous days, and follow-up as directed.

## THE RESULTS

**88.45%** of patients will not be recalled.

**11.55%** of patients will be recalled.

**96.86%** of patients recalled will not have a malignancy.

## FOLLOW-UP

If your results are suspicious of potential malignancy, the radiologist will be in contact with your primary care provider. Your next steps may include:

An MRI

Molecular Breast Imaging (MBI)

A Biopsy

If you need additional testing, it's understandable to be nervous, but know you are doing all you can to catch any abnormalities. Discovering cancers early is your best option for productive treatment.

### Sources

[jma.mma.org/index.php/jma/articles/view/12175/4862](https://www.mma.org/index.php/jma/articles/view/12175/4862)

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