

#### **Breast Imaging Suite**

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## **BREAST ULTRASOUND**

Breast ultrasound does not use X-rays to create diagnostic images of the breast. Instead, this procedure uses reflected sound waves to view and produce pictures of the internal structures of the breast. A breast ultrasound can show all areas of the breast, including the area closest to the chest wall, which can be hard to study with a mammogram.

A breast ultrasound is used to determine whether a breast lump is filled with fluid (a cyst) or is a solid structure. An ultrasound generally does not replace the need for a mammogram; however, it is often used in conjunction to further evaluate a questionable area seen on a mammogram.

For a breast ultrasound, a small handheld instrument called a transducer or probe is passed across the breast. It transmits imperceptible sound waves that are reflected back to the transducer. A detector analyzes the sound waves and converts them into a picture.

### **Preparation**

Wear an outfit that makes it easy to undress above the waist, such as a two-piece outfit.

### **The Procedure**

Your breast ultrasound will be performed by a trained sonographer. You will be asked to undress above the waist and drape a paper or cloth covering around your shoulders. Remove all jewelry from around your neck.

A special gel will be applied to your breast to improve the transmission of the sound waves. The transducer is pressed against your breast and moved back and forth.

The test usually takes between 15 to 30 minutes, but can sometimes take longer. Additional time may be needed if a biopsy is also scheduled. You may be asked to wait after your exam until a radiologist has reviewed the information. The radiologist may want to perform additional ultrasound views of some areas of your breast.

### **After the Exam**

Your exam will be carefully reviewed by a radiologist, a physician specially trained to interpret breast ultrasound. He will provide your doctor with a detailed report. Your doctor will discuss these results with you and explain what they mean in relation to your health.