

Breast Imaging Suite

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BREAST ULTRASOUND

Breast ultrasound uses reflected sound waves to view and produce pictures of the internal structures of the breast. No ionizing-radiation (X-ray) is used to create these images.

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 the mammogram. It is also used to determine whether a breast lump is filled with fluid (a cyst) or is a solid structure.

PREPARATION

There is no specific preparation for this study. However, on the day of your exam 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 specially trained sonographer. You will be asked to remove all jewelry from around the neck, undress above the waist, and drape a cloth around your shoulders.

A special gel will be applied to your breast to improve the transmission of the sound waves. The ultrasound probe (transducer) is then gently pressed against your breast and moved back and forth over the area of interest until the desired images are captured. You may be asked to wait after your exam until the radiologist has reviewed your study. The radiologist may want to perform additional ultrasound views of some areas of your breast.

There is usually no discomfort during the exam. If the study is performed over an area of tenderness, you may feel pressure or minor discomfort.

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.

AFTER THE EXAM

The radiologist, a physician specially trained in interpreting breast ultrasound, will study your exam and provide your doctor with a detailed report. Your physician will then discuss the results with you as it pertains to your health.