

## Mammography and Early Detection of Breast Cancer

**At what age should I start getting mammograms?**

You should have a baseline mammogram at age 40 unless there are reasons to start sooner, such as family history of breast cancer, history of breast biopsies, or you have a lump you can feel. Your family physician is the best person to ask about this if you are younger than 40.

Additionally, the American Cancer Society recommends women age 20 and older perform monthly breast self-exams and have a physician examination every 3 years.

**Do I need a prescription for a mammogram?**

No, you do not need a prescription for a screening mammogram; you do, however, need one for a diagnostic mammogram.

**How long does a screening mammogram take?**

A screening mammogram takes approximately 30 minutes.

**Does my menstrual cycle alter the results of my mammogram?**

No, but you may want to schedule your mammogram when your breasts are less tender, usually 7-10 days after your period. This will allow for better, more comfortable compression.

**Do the Breast Health Centers accept my insurance?**

Lee Memorial will submit claims to your insurance carrier. However, it is your responsibility to call your provider to verify coverage.

**Does a mammogram have to be done exactly one year from my last mammogram?**

Unless you have a problem, a screening mammogram should be done no sooner than 365 days from your last one because of insurance company requirements.

**What should I do if I feel a lump?**

Don't panic! Many breast lumps are benign. Do call your physician and seek a medical evaluation.

**What is the difference between a screening mammogram and a diagnostic mammogram?**

A screening mammogram is an initial or yearly follow-up without any problems identified. A diagnostic mammogram is indicated for a breast complaint, such as a breast lump or nipple discharge, or to evaluate or follow an abnormality found during a screening mammogram.

The Breast Health Centers utilize ImageChecker, Computer Aided Detection system for breast cancer screening. The system acts as a "second set of eyes" for the radiologist. It creates a digital image of the mammogram film and then analyzes it with special software which can alert the radiologist to any areas of concern for comparison with the original film.

### **Is there anyway to make my mammogram more comfortable?**

Yes, all Breast Health Centers locations offer the "MammoPad" for an additional \$5. This single use pad provides the extra comfort of a thin pad against the sometimes cold shelf and pressure of the machine. It does not interfere with the quality of the image. When scheduling your appointment, let the scheduler know you are interested in using the MammoPad.

### **Why can't I have an ultrasound instead of a mammogram?**

Ultrasound is not a substitute for a mammogram because it cannot pick up all solid lesions. It is used to identify cystic lesions and to determine whether the cyst is simple (fluid filled) or complex (fluid and tissue). It is also helpful in evaluating a palpable lump (one you can feel) when you've had a negative mammogram. Mammograms can identify solid masses that cannot be found on ultrasound.

### **Where are the Breast Health Centers located?**

The Breast Health Centers of Lee Memorial Health System have four facilities to better serve the community. Cape Coral Hospital on Del Prado Boulevard, Lee Memorial Hospital on Cleveland Avenue, HealthPark Commons Outpatient Building on Bass Road, and Riverwalk Professional Center on College Parkway. Your scheduler can provide you with more specific directions. Our scheduling phone number is (239) 432-2559.

women's  
services

LEE MEMORIAL  
HEALTH SYSTEM