

3D MAMMOGRAPHY IS HERE!

OFFERING PEACE OF MIND THROUGH EVEN EARLIER DETECTION.

As a referring provider, you expect the best in breast imaging from us. That's why we're thrilled to now offer 3D mammography in Thurston County — a remarkable new technology in the fight against breast cancer. 3D mammography will be available to our patients late Spring 2014. This information will help you understand the new technology and be prepared for questions your patients might ask.

What is tomosynthesis?

Digital breast tomosynthesis (tomo), also known as 3D mammography, is a revolutionary new screening and diagnostic breast imaging tool to improve the early detection of breast cancer. During the exam, an x-ray arm sweeps over the breast, taking multiple images in seconds. Images are displayed as a series of thin (1 mm) slices that can be viewed by our radiologists as individual images or in a dynamic interactive animation. Approved as an imaging modality by the FDA in early 2011, tomo is used in combination with 2D digital mammography.

What are the benefits of using tomosynthesis?

Many studies in Europe and the U.S. have substantiated superior breast cancer detection rates when combining 3D mammography with conventional 2D mammography. Studies have demonstrated a 10%-30% increase in overall breast cancer detection (over 2D imaging alone). Tomosynthesis has also been proven to reduce the number of call-backs for further imaging by as much as 30%. Two of the top benefits are improving the early detection of breast cancer and providing peace of mind due to increased accuracy.

How is 3D mammography different than 2D?

Traditional digital mammography takes two-dimensional pictures of the breast and is still one of the most advanced tools available for detecting breast abnormalities. Since there could be a significant amount of overlapping tissue in 2D images, this results in difficulty differentiating a real lesion from normal overlapping tissue. Rather than viewing the breast tissue in 2D images, our radiologists can examine the tissue one thin layer at a time, in a sense traveling through the structure of the breast like flipping pages of a book. Fine details are more visible and are less likely to be hidden by overlapping tissue.

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Is there increased radiation with tomo?

Tomosynthesis is safe. Radiation exposure to the breast is very low. The radiation dose for a combined 2D/3D mammography exam is well below the acceptable limits defined by the FDA, and is only a fraction of the level of radiation everyone receives annually from the natural background of being outdoors. There is no evidence that this low level of radiation has any significant effect on the breasts. As with any x-ray, patients should inform their technologist before an exam if they are (or may be) pregnant.

Will I be able to see tomosynthesis images in my office or the hospitals?

Yes, 3D images are available on the TRA Portal or PACS Viewer. For more information about the TRA Portal, visit: www.tranow.com/inteleconnect.

Will the reports I receive change?

Mammography reports will look virtually the same. There will be an additional descriptor for the 3D part of the exam.

Which patients should use tomosynthesis?

This technology will become our new standard of care and will be available to all patients for screening and diagnostic mammograms—so you won't have to choose.

What can patients expect during a 3D mammogram?

3D mammography complements standard 2D mammography. No additional compression is required and it only takes a few more seconds. The experience will be very similar to mammograms patients have had in the past.

Do I still need to refer patients yearly for their screening mammograms?

Yes. Although 2D/3D combo exams have been proven to detect more cancers, TRA Medical Imaging supports the American Cancer Society's guidelines which recommend that women 40 and older receive a screening mammogram every year.

Do patients need a referral for a 3D mammogram?

For a routine annual (screening) mammogram, patients do not need a written referral. For patients experiencing unusual breast symptoms, a written referral is required for a diagnostic mammogram.

Annual screening mammograms save lives through early detection of breast cancer. Early detection means more treatment options and increased survival rates. TRA supports the American Cancer Society's recommendation of annual screening mammograms for every woman age 40 and older.