



How to prepare for a Screening Mammogram

What is a mammogram?

A mammogram is a low dose X-Ray that can find changes in the breast, even when they are too small for you or your health care provider to feel or see.

Mammography is the most effective screening tool for the early detection of breast cancer for most women. Early detection can reduce deaths from breast cancer.

How to prepare for a mammogram

Getting a mammogram for the first time may seem intimidating, but the process is very quick and straightforward. Click on the link below for a video on how to prepare for your mammogram and see the tips below:

<https://www.hamiltonhealthsciences.ca/share/mammogram-tips/>

- Wear a two-piece outfit since you'll be asked to remove your top.
- Do not use deodorants, antiperspirants, body lotions, or talcum powders on the day of your mammogram.
- Keep longer hair tied or pinned up if possible.
- Some women's breasts are tender the week before and after their period. Book your mammogram for a time when your breasts are not so tender.
- Some women take a mild pain relief pill, such as the kind you would take for a headache, one to two hours before the appointment. Only do this if it will not affect any other medicines or any health concerns you may have.
- Some experts suggest having less caffeine for two weeks before the appointment to help reduce tenderness.
- If you're worried about your mammogram, try bringing a friend and making a day of it to ease your nerves.

What to expect?

1. You will change into a hospital gown after you register at the front desk.
2. Once in the room, you will be asked to remove your gown.
3. A Registered X-ray Technologist who specializes in mammography will place your breasts (one at a time) on a special x-ray machine.
4. The technologist may lift, turn and/or change your position in order to get all of the breast tissue into the image.
5. Pressure will be applied with a plastic compression plate and will stay in place until the image is taken. This pressure does not harm the breast.
6. A screening mammogram usually involves 4 to 6 images (2 to 3 of each breast).
7. For most women, the time it takes to complete a mammogram is 10 to 15 minutes.
8. The results of your mammogram will be sent to your health care provider within 2 weeks of your test.

