



# EARLY DETECTION

## The Key To Overcoming Breast Cancer

### Early Detection is the Key

Although there has been a decline in the rate of deaths from breast cancer in recent years, it is still the second leading cause of cancer death in women, exceeded only by lung cancer. Studies have shown that, when detected early, the chance for successful treatment of breast cancer is nearly 100%.

Methods for early detection of breast cancer include clinical examinations by a healthcare professional a mammogram. In most cases, mammography can identify an abnormal breast mass as much as two years before it can be detected by touch.

Some physicians also recommend a monthly breast self examination for all women beginning at the age of 20, following proper training by a qualified healthcare professional.

*The breast health care technology of tomorrow...today.  
Do it for those who love you.*



FOR ADDITIONAL BREAST HEALTH INFORMATION VISIT  
[GLACIALRIDGE.ORG](http://GLACIALRIDGE.ORG)



GLACIAL RIDGE  
HEALTH SYSTEM *heartfelt care*  
866.667.4747 | [GLACIALRIDGE.ORG](http://GLACIALRIDGE.ORG)



GLACIAL RIDGE  
HEALTH SYSTEM *heartfelt care*

Information provided by Pink Ribbon.

## What is a Mammogram?

A mammogram is an x-ray examination of the breasts, used to detect and diagnose breast diseases. Screening mammography is used as a preventive measure for women who have no symptoms of breast disease.

A screening mammogram usually involves two views of each breast. Diagnostic mammography involves additional views of the breast, and is used when an abnormality is found during screening, or in women who have breast complaints, such as a breast mass, nipple discharge, breast pain, or skin irritation.

## Are there different kinds of mammograms?

Two kinds of mammograms are available:

- Screen-film mammography
- Digital mammography

In screen-film mammography, the breast image is captured on x-ray film. The film is then developed, and a physician who specializes in the interpretation of x-rays and other types of diagnostic imaging studies, reviews the films on a high intensity light box.

In digital mammography, the breast image is captured on specially designed digital detectors. The digital detector converts x-rays into an electrical signal, which is then sent to a computer. The radiologist can review the digital mammogram on a high-resolution computer monitor.

## Who should have a mammogram?

The American Cancer Society recommends that all women have a baseline screening mammogram between the age of 35 and 40 and that beginning at the age of 40, women have the annual screening mammogram.

In addition to annual screening for women 40 and older, women with certain risk factors should discuss an appropriate screening program with their physician.

## What are the risk factors for breast cancer?

Some of the known risk factors for breast cancer include:

- Family or personal history of breast cancer
- Early menstrual onset/late onset menopause
- Use of oral contraceptives
- Use of hormone replacement therapy
- Alcohol use (2 or more drinks per day)



*Breast cancer will affect an average of one in eight women sometime in their lifetime.*

## How should I prepare for a mammogram?

- If you have had a mammogram in different facilities, call those facilities in advance and arrange to have your previous mammograms, reports and any other treatment reports forwarded to Glacial Ridge Health System.
- Do not wear deodorant, powder or cream under your arms as it may interfere with the quality of your mammogram.

## How is mammography performed?

- You will need to undress above the waist and will be given a gown to wear during your mammogram.
- You and a breast imaging technologist will be the only ones present during the mammogram. The technologist will position each breast, one at a time, on the mammography equipment. The breast will then be compressed, and the x-ray will be taken.
- During your digital mammogram, each x-ray will appear on the technologist's computer screen, and they will be able to make sure each image shows the right view before re-positioning you for the next x-ray.

## Is a mammogram painful?

Breast compression may cause some discomfort for a brief time during each x-ray, but it should not be painful. Breast compression helps obtain better images by:

- Spreading out the breast so the maximum amount of tissue can be examined.
- Allowing a lower x-ray dose to be used, since the x-ray beams pass through a thinner amount of tissue.
- Holding the breast in place to prevent blurring cause by motion.

If you have sensitive breasts, schedule your mammogram at a time of the month when your breasts will be less tender. In general, the week after a menstrual cycle is when breasts are less tender.

## How will I get my results?

Your mammogram will be read by a radiologist. The radiologist will send a report to your physician and your physician will notify you of the results.

**AN ANNUAL MAMMOGRAM IS  
ONE OF YOUR BEST DEFENSES  
AGAINST BREAST CANCER.**