

Patient information and leaflets

For more information you can visit our patient leaflets page on the internet, by visiting <http://www.whittington.nhs.uk/our-services/patient-leaflets> where you can print and download a patient leaflet.

Interpreting services

If you require an interpreter please ask a member of staff to contact the interpreting services on 020 7288 5191/5114/3974/3226

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Magdala Avenue
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Phone: 020 7272 3070

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Risks

This is a very safe examination but there is some risk involved with most procedures. For a mammogram the risks include:

- a small risk of radiation as with any x-ray examination, but this is no greater than a regular chest x-ray.
- if you are pregnant you should not have this examination; please discuss the alternatives with your specialist. Please talk to your specialist radiologist before your examination if you have any concerns about these risks.

Any further questions?


Please phone the Imaging nurse specialist on 020 7288 5685
Monday – Friday 9am - 5pm.

This is an answer phone service, please leave your name and phone number so the nurse can phone you back.

A mammogram

A patient's guide



.... caring for you 

This leaflet is for women who are having an x-ray examination of their breasts, known as a mammogram. It explains what it is for, what it involves and any significant risks that there may be.

What is a mammogram?

It is an x-ray of the breasts and is a method of checking whether the breast tissue is normal or if there are any abnormalities present.

What are the alternatives?

A manual examination or an ultrasound scan are both alternative methods of checking the breasts and may be used in addition to an x-ray. But neither of these is a substitute for a mammogram, which can give more accurate detection of certain abnormalities. This will be discussed with you.



Preparation for your mammogram

No specific preparation is needed before your mammogram, but there are some things that you should be aware of:

- If you suffer from tender breasts just before a period, please telephone 020 7288 5680 to change your appointment to a time when you feel less tender.
- If there is any possibility that you are pregnant please telephone 020 7288 5680 to cancel your appointment as a mammogram should be avoided.
- please do not use talcum powder or deodorant on the day of your mammogram as these can interfere with the x-ray picture.

What does a mammogram involve?

A female radiographer will take your x-rays. She specialises in mammograms and will explain the procedure and ask you a few Questions, for example, do you have any problems?

- a gown will be provided for you to change into.
- you will be asked to stand next to an x-ray machine.

- each breast will be positioned between special x-ray plates one at a time and some pressure applied for a few seconds, while the pictures are taken.

- some women find this uncomfortable or painful but it is necessary to compress the breasts sufficiently to produce clear pictures.

- the procedure takes about ten minutes.

- sometimes the radiologist (specialist doctor) may require further tests using ultrasound. This is not painful and does not involve x-rays. A little lubricating jelly is spread over the skin and a probe is moved over the surface of the breast.

- please note: if you are asked to stay for an ultrasound this does not necessarily mean that there is an abnormality present.

Results

When possible, the results will be available on the day, when this is not possible the results will be forwarded to the doctor who requested the mammogram, within ten days.