

Digital Mammogram

What You Should Know

Early Detection **is the Key**

Because our primary goal has always been to deliver the highest quality care to our patients, we are adding digital mammography to our women's health diagnostic services.



Brattleboro Memorial Hospital

Caring for our Community

17 Belmont Avenue, Brattleboro, VT 05301

802-257-0341 • www.bmhvt.org



Brattleboro Memorial Hospital

Caring for our Community

A New Ally in the Fight Against Breast Cancer

Breast cancer will affect an average of one in eight women sometime in their lifetime. It is the second most common cause of cancer related deaths in women. Numerous studies prove that early detection is a vital component in the successful treatment of breast cancer.

Mammograms play a central part in the early detection of breast cancer because they can detect changes in the breast that may be early signs of cancer, but are too small or subtle to be felt. The use of mammography has greatly enhanced the ability to detect breast cancers at earlier stages. Now a new technology called full field digital mammography shows great promise in the fight against breast cancer.

What is Full Field Digital Mammography?

Digital mammography uses computers and specially designed digital detectors to produce an image that can be displayed on a high-resolution computer monitor, and transmitted and stored just like computer files.

From a patient's point of view, having a digital mammogram is very much like having a conventional screenfilm mammogram.

Both film-based and digital mammography use compression and x-rays to create clear images of the inside of the breast. During all mammography exams, the technologist positions the patient to image the breast from different angles and compresses the breast with a paddle to obtain optimal image quality.

Unlike film-based mammography, digital mammograms produce images that appear on the technologist's monitor in a matter of seconds. There is no waiting for film to develop, which can mean a shorter time spent in the breast imaging suite.

*Remember...
an annual
mammogram is
one of your best
defenses against
breast cancer.*

The Benefits of Digital Mammography

Unlike other parts of the body, the breast is composed mainly of soft tissue. When breast tissue is x-rayed, it creates an image that looks something like a smoky haze, making it difficult to see tiny "spots," called microcalcifications, and other subtle signs of early cancer.

With digital mammography, the radiologist reviews electronic images of the breast, using special high resolution monitors. The physician can adjust the brightness, change contrast, and zoom in for close ups of specific areas of interest. Being able to manipulate images is one of the main benefits of digital technology.

Another convenience of digital mammography over film-based systems is it can greatly reduce the need for retakes due to over or under exposure. This potentially saves additional time and reduces your exposure to x-rays.

Because they are electronic, digital mammography images can be transmitted quickly across a network. Digital images can also be easily stored, copied without any loss of information, and transmitted and received in a more streamlined manner, eliminating dependence on only one set of "original" films.

For additional information, please contact our office at 802-251-8431 or 802-251-8451.

