

Patient Information

Mammography

What is a Mammogram?

A mammogram is an x-ray examination of the breast tissue using a dedicated mammography x-ray unit. A mammogram is used to detect and diagnose breast pathology.

What preparation is required?

You will be asked to not apply any talcum powder or deodorant on the morning of the examination, as these products may contain substances that can alter the appearance of the mammogram and sometimes even mimic pathology.

Please bring any previous images of your breasts to your appointment. These images can be used to make examination comparisons and are vital in detecting any minute changes occurring within this region of the body. When the history of previous chest images can be reviewed, changes can be more readily identified whereby a more accurate diagnosis can be determined.

It is also recommended that before your appointment you reach out to your family and ask relatives if they too have ever been diagnosed with breast cancer, tumors or other health related issues within the chest region. This will help to complete a more accurate picture of your family history of breast cancer or other related diseases. It may help if they can pinpoint the approximate age of their diagnosis and/or any facts they can remember about their diagnosis. Upon arrival, you will be required to fill out a questionnaire detailing your presenting symptoms as well as your family history.

What happens during your Mammogram?

You will be required to change into a gown, removing the top half of your clothing. For this reason, it is advisable to wear a two piece outfit to help for the examination process. A female Radiographer will take you into the mammography room and thoroughly explain the procedure and what is required of you, including a demonstration of the equipment that will be used.

A mammogram is acquired by taking an x-ray of your breast/s while the breast tissue is compressed between the paddle and the detector of the mammography unit. Compression is a necessary part of the procedure as it increases the detail of the image as well as reducing the dose and preventing blurring caused by movement. You may experience some discomfort but please be aware that the compression is only for a few seconds while the image is being taken and will be released immediately after the exposure. Please communicate to the Radiographer if you are experiencing any pain at any point of your examination.

A routine mammogram is performed generally in a standing position and requires at least 2 images to be taken, in different positions of each breast. Once the procedure is complete all images will be viewed by a Radiologist to ensure that no further images are needed. It is quite common for extra views to be performed and sometimes all that is necessary is for the breast to be viewed in a different position to remove any suspicious appearances.

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How long will the Mammogram take?

A total of 60 minutes should be sufficient to allow for your complete mammogram examination. A mammogram is quite a quick procedure, however we ask that you allow at least 30 minutes for the first examination. This ensures that there is adequate time for a detailed explanation of the procedure to be given, changing as well as sufficient time for the images to be checked with a Radiologist to ensure that no further views are required.

It is also very common for an ultrasound of the breast tissue to be performed in conjunction with the mammogram, which will require an additional 30 minutes (60 minutes in total for this examination).

What is the radiation dose?

All measures are taken to limit the radiation dose for this examination. All routine images are checked with the Radiologist prior to any subsequent imaging being performed.

Some patients may be required to have an ultrasound of the breast tissue prior to proceeding to a mammogram. This will be confirmed by our Customer Service Team if this applies to you.

Please keep in mind your doctor believes that the benefit of having this examination performed outweighs the very small risk to your health that is caused by exposing your body to this low dose of radiation.

How much will the Mammogram cost?

The cost of a mammogram depends on whether you meet Medicare criteria for a rebate. Please discuss your eligibility for a rebate with your referring doctor prior to your appointment with Qscan.

Our Customer Service Team will be able to advise you of all costs involved with your mammogram including any out of pocket cost (if relevant).

When can I get my results?

Images obtained from your scan are digitally recorded. At Qscan, a subspecialty trained Radiologist interprets the images obtained and provides a report for your doctor within 24 hours. Reports and images will be available electronically via the patient app and web portal after your examination. If required, films are available for collection or delivery to your referring practitioner. You may need to make a follow up appointment to discuss the results with your referring practitioner.

Where can I go for a Mammogram?

Qscan Radiology Clinics offers Mammography at our Annerley clinic.

For further details please call one of our friendly Qscan staff on **1300 177 226** or visit us at: **qscan.com.au**