

A mammogram is an x-ray examination of the breast. It is used to detect changes in the tissues in the breast and to diagnose breast disease. Mammograms are performed on patients who have a history of pain, lumps, or other problems in their breasts. Those are called diagnostic mammograms. However, it is also ordered as an exam for patients who have no breast complaints. In these cases, they are called screening mammograms.

Mammograms are performed in the following locations; please contact us for more information or to schedule an appointment:

**St. Joseph's Regional Medical Center, Paterson: 973.754.4343**

**St. Joseph's Wayne Hospital, Wayne: 973.956.3312**

**St. Joseph's Ambulatory Imaging Center, Clifton: 973.569.6300**

### **What should I expect when I undergo my mammogram?**

Since mammograms are best read when they can be compared to previous mammograms you have had, you will be asked to bring your most recent mammogram pictures with you at the time of your appointment. A routine screening mammogram usually consists of four pictures, two of each breast. For each breast, one picture is taken top to bottom of the breast, the other from side to side. The mammogram film is very sensitive to even small particles; therefore, you will be asked to avoid using any deodorant or dusting powder on the day of your mammogram. When you are called for your mammogram, the technologist will ask you questions about your personal and family history. Answer as accurately as possible, since these answers help our staff determine your level of risk for breast disease.

You will be asked to undress from the waist up, and will be given a gown to put on with the opening in the front. One breast at a time, the technologist will place your breast between two plates on the mammography machine, and the plates will gently compress, or squeeze, your breast. This may cause a little discomfort to you, but please know that this compression is necessary in order to get the best possible pictures of your breast tissue using the least amount of radiation.

You will be asked to hold your breath during each exposure. This is to make sure that there is no motion, or else the picture can be blurred. Once all pictures are taken, the technologist will process them to make sure that no more are needed. At that time, you will be told that you can leave. Your films will be taken to the radiologist, who will provide a report to your physician within a few days.