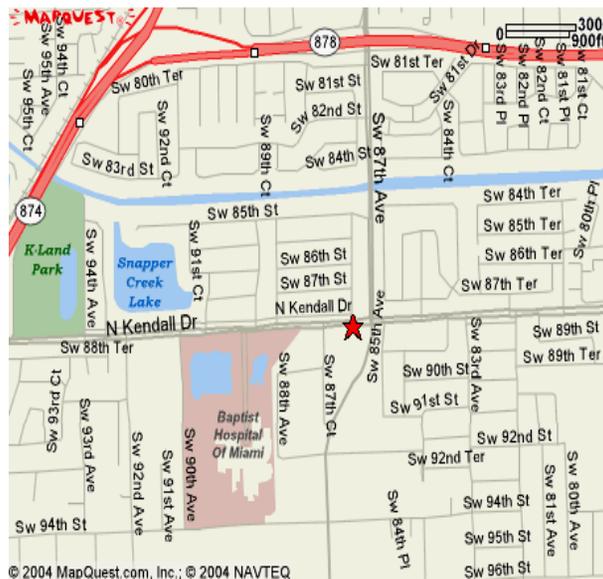


American College of Radiology BI-RADS Categories

ACR Category (Birads)	Assessment	Probability of cancer	% of MMG
0	Needs additional imaging or comparison films	NA	< 10%
1	Negative; routine follow-up	NA	>90%
2	Benign findings/negative; routine follow-up		
3	Probably benign: short interval f/u suggested	<2%	4%
4	Suspicious abnormality: bx suggested	3-49%	2/1000-8/1000
5	Highly suggestive of malignancy	>95%	
6	Biopsy proven malignancy	NA	NA



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**Raymond Wayne Whitted MD, MPH**

*...dedicated to healthy lifestyles and safe, state-of-the-art surgery for women of all ages.*

**Mammography**

Mammography saves lives! It is an x-ray of the breast that is safe and is used to detect problems with a woman's breasts. It uses a special, low-dose x-ray machine to take pictures of both breasts. Mammograms allow a doctor to look closer at the breast tissue identifying lumps and abnormalities. Mammography is the best screening tool that doctors have for evaluating the breast tissue.

Mammograms have both benefits and limitations. For example, some cancers can't be detected by a mammogram, but may be detectable by breast self-exam and/or clinical breast examination.

Checking your own breasts for lumps or other changes is called a breast self-examination (BSE). Studies so far have not shown that BSE alone reduces the numbers of deaths from breast cancer. BSE should not take the place of clinical breast exam and a mammogram.

**Are there different types of Mammograms?**

- **Screening Mammograms:** are done for women who have no symptoms of breast cancer. The American Cancer Society recommends having a screening Mammogram yearly after the age of 40.
- **Diagnostic Mammograms:** are done when a woman has symptoms of breast cancer or a breast lump. This Mammogram takes longer because more pictures are taken (usually 4 for each breast).
- **Digital Mammogram:** an electronic image is stored on a computer. Current research has not shown that digital images are better at finding cancer than x-ray images.

## ***...dedicated to healthy lifestyles and safe, state-of-the-art, innovative surgery for women of all ages***

### **What if a lump is found?**

Your doctor may order other tests, such as an ultrasound to determine if the lump is cystic or solid. Occasionally a biopsy, a test where a small amount of tissue is taken from the lump and area around the lump, may be ordered. The tissue is sent to a lab to look for cancer or changes that may mean cancer is likely to develop.

Breast lumps or growths can be benign (not cancer) or malignant (cancer). Finding breast cancer early means that a woman has a better chance of surviving the disease. There are also more choices for treatment when breast cancer is found early.

### **How is a Mammogram done?**

You stand in front of a special x-ray machine. The x-ray technologist places your breasts (one at a time between two plastic plates). The plates press your breast to make it flat so that the x-ray can penetrate the breast tissue and make the test more accurate. This may cause you some discomfort such as a squeezing or pinching. It is better to have your mammogram just after your menstrual period.

Most often, two pictures are taken of each breast—one from the side and one from above. A screening mammogram takes about 15 minutes to accomplish.



### **What if I have breast implants?**

If you have breast implants, be sure to tell your mammography facility when you make an appointment. You will need an x-ray tech who is trained in dealing with implants. This is important because breast implants can hide some breast tissue, which could make it difficult for the radiologist to see breast cancer when looking. For this reason, to take a mammogram of breast with an implant, the technician might gently lift the breast tissue slightly away from the implant.

### **How often should I get a mammogram?**

- **The American Cancer Society guidelines states a woman should get yearly mammograms beginning at age 40.**
- **Women who have had breast cancer or other breast problems or who have a family history of breast cancer might need to start getting mammograms before age 40 or they might need to get them more often than yearly. Talk with your doctor about when to start and how often you should have a mammogram.**

### **How do I get ready for my mammogram?**

- **Schedule your mammogram just after your period because your breasts are less tender.**
- **Take an anti-inflammatory medicine like advil before you have your procedure.**
- **Acknowledge breast implants when you make your appointment if you have them.**
- **Wear a shirt with shorts, pants, or skirt so that you only have to remove your top.**
- **Don't wear any deodorant, perfume, lotion, or powder under your arms or on your breasts on the day of your mammogram. These things may make shadows on you x-ray picture.**

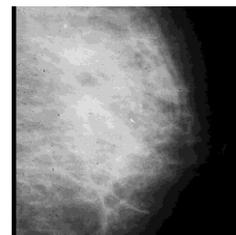
### **Are there any problems with mammograms?**

The limits of mammography include:

- They are only part of a complete exam. Your doctor and your radiologist should do a clinical breast exam.
- False negatives: this means everything may look normal on the mammogram when in fact something abnormal is present. Younger women and women on menopause hormone therapy are more likely to have this because of denser breast tissue. The average reported rate for mammography is 10% (1 out of 10)
- False positives: This is when the mammogram results look like an abnormality when in fact there is no abnormality. False positives are also more common in younger women and those who take menopausal hormone therapy. These may lead to many unnecessary biopsies.

### **Examples of Mammogram Pictures**

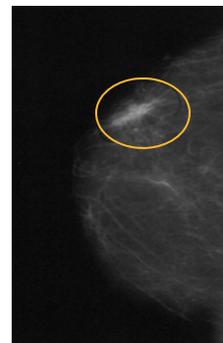
Dense Breasts



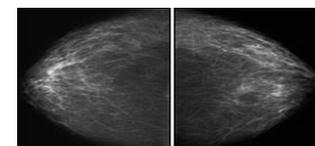
Non-Dense Breast



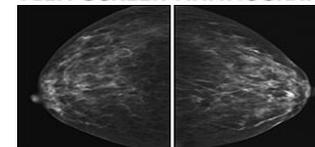
Breast Cancer



Mammogram types



FILM-SCREEN MAMMOGRAM



DIGITAL MAMMOGRAM