

THANK YOU FOR CHOOSING TO HAVE YOUR MAMMOGRAM AT ASTRA RADIOLOGY

The Breast Imaging Centre at Astra Radiology now provides a choice between digital mammography and digital mammographic tomosynthesis. You will be asked to decide between the two techniques. If you would like further information, our specialised breast radiographers are very happy to talk to you when you arrive for your appointment. You will also be asked to fill in a questionnaire when you arrive for your mammogram.

Digital mammography is the traditional mammographic technique, which has been available for many years at Ascot Radiology, and is used worldwide in screening for breast cancer and for assessing women and men presenting with a symptom. Screening with digital mammography has been shown in multiple studies to reduce the chance of dying of breast cancer by a third.

The next generation of breast imaging is mammographic tomosynthesis and is on offer at our Ascot Central & St Heliers branches. Research has consistently shown that using tomosynthesis there is:

- an improvement in breast cancer detection, and
- a decrease in call backs, which may lessen anxiety for patients.

The increase in detection of cancer is shown across all age groups and all breast tissue types. Mammographic tomosynthesis is suitable for screening and also assessment of those who have a symptom. It may also be possible to use digital tomosynthesis on women who have implants.

HOW IS IT DONE?

Traditional digital mammography produces two images of each breast. In some cases, this results in overlapping tissue, which can make it more difficult to detect cancers. Tomosynthesis is performed using a scanner that is very similar to look at and with a similar technique and compression.

In breast tomosynthesis the scanner takes many images or 'slices' of each breast, reducing the amount of overlapping tissue. The x-ray dose is the same for both tests and remains low. The time taken to obtain the images is also the same for both technologies.

COST

For current pricing, please ask the booking specialist when you make your appointment.

There is a price difference between digital mammography and digital breast tomosynthesis given the level of technology and the additional time taken to interpret the many more images. Whilst many insurance companies will reimburse both examinations, we recommend you check with your insurer.

If you are a Southern Cross member, we would like to advise you that Southern Cross will pay the cost of the traditional mammogram, as per your policy agreement. If you choose digital breast tomosynthesis, you will be asked to cover the \$108.00 (\$106 for unilateral) cost difference at the time of your examination. This is an additional charge to your co-payment.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Following your mammogram or digital breast tomosynthesis, the study will be read by two independent breast radiologists. Occasionally the first or second reader will want to look at something in more detail. This does not always mean you have cancer. For mammography, approximately 10% of women have additional imaging after their first and 5% in subsequent mammograms.

The chance of being recalled is 20% less with digital breast tomosynthesis, which has the potential to reduce unnecessary biopsies.