

MAMMOGRAPHY

WHAT IT IS AND WHY IT IS EXECUTED

Mammography consists of the radiological evaluation with a dedicated technique of the mammary glands. Mammography is a method that allows the doctor to diagnose breast cancers even in the precocious phase, when their treatment determines the complete recovery. The compression of the breast allows an optimal study and by decreasing the thickness of the breast allows the use of a very low dose of radiation; the possibility that these radiations encourage an increase in the incidence of tumours is minimal. This technique allows to detect tumours when they are still initial, still not palpable or documented with other medical examinations. Mammography is however not an absolute examination and the incidence of false negatives is about 10%, also in relation to the mammary structure.

The execution of mammography and/or breast ultrasound does not replace the clinical conduction of the case.

How it is conducted

In this structure, mammography is always performed by a female medical radiology technician.

A bare breast in an upright station, one breast at a time is carefully placed on a special support and compressed by a plastic plate called compressor; two or three projections for each breast are performed according to the case.

Mammography does not cause pain or damage or signs to the breast tissue but only a slight sense of discomfort due to compression which is performed slowly and is indispensable for proper execution of the exam.

When it is executed

In women with the menstrual cycle still present, it is advisable to perform the examination between the eighth and the twelfth days from the beginning of the cycle.

Presumed or ascertained pregnant women do not undergo mammography, unless otherwise assessed case by case of the radiologist doctor

Diagnostic protocols

- Around 35 years, a first mammography of reference is expected to be performed
- From 35 years, a mammography is expected to be performed every 12 months for patients with a higher risk factor and in any case starting from 10 years prior to diagnosis to mother or sister
- From 40 years of age, a mammography is expected to be performed every 12 months even for asymptomatic patients

- In case of a clinically palpable nodule in women over the age of 35, mammography is performed in an emergency procedure without checking the menstrual phase.
- Case by case, however, the radiologist can advise to do immediately the mammary ultrasound, that if it leads to the diagnosis of cyst allows you to proceed with mammography in the optimal period.

Mammography report

From February 2011, the Mammography reading service is entrusted to TeleRAD, a provider of teleradiology services and medical imaging solutions.

The reporting of the mammograms will be carried out by a pool of expert breast specialist doctors who, as European Commission guidelines (fourth edition 2006) and recommendations of the CCM of the Ministry of Health (2006), guarantee a load of Work of at least 5.000 exam-bed mammography screening every year.

The report is available one week after the examination.

Urgent examinations (clinical evidence) may be reported at the same time as performing the examination, to quickly address the patient to the appropriate therapeutic process.

Warnings

It is advisable to refrain from applying on the breast and underarm deodorant, oil, cream, dust and especially talc in the hours immediately prior to the examination.

At the time of the examination it is important to carry with them all the documentation concerning the breast diagnostic investigations carried out previously; it could be of fundamental importance for the Radiologist doctor for a more precise judgement of comparison.
The previous documentation is retained until reporting is completed.

After examination

In case of dense breasts or doubtful images it is necessary to use the execution of additional projections or to complementary mammary ultrasound on the indication of the radiologist; however, these procedures do not indicate the presence of pathology but are adopted for a safer diagnosis of negativity.

The CD containing the medical images, the report and the attached breast card must be carefully stored and presented to each subsequent breast investigation.

Equipment and development technique

The examination is performed with indirect digital technique using a INSTRUMENTARIUM model mammogram and a KODAK CR model 850 with software dedicated to mammography.

Medical Radiology Technicians

Medical radiology technicians involved in the execution of the mammography tests are the ladies:

- Monica Zuri
- Sonia Angelica Valenzuela
- Martina Bettarini