

Are You Worried About Breast Cancer?

New 3D-Guided Breast Biopsy Technology at Derry Imaging Center Lessens Worry and Improves Outcomes

Breast cancer among top 10 fears for women

Breast cancer is probably the most talked about cancer among women. Worrying about breast cancer may also be counted among the top ten fears that unite women. Yet, the worry that unites women has also been found to divide them in how likely they are to schedule a yearly mammogram.

Women without a family history of breast cancer use their fear of breast cancer as motivation to have mammograms annually. However, among women with a family history of breast cancer, severe worry about breast cancer is often a barrier to mammography, motivated by fear of the unknown and a false belief that “what I don’t know can’t hurt me.”

Women with dense breasts more at risk

Older methods of mammography didn’t help relieve these fears. Digital 2D mammography was able to detect smaller areas of concern than previous film-based methods, but still resulted in frequent call backs for further study of those spots, especially among women with dense breast tissue. The composition of dense breast tissue has less fat and more of the fibrous and glandular, connective tissue. The problem, then, is that dense tissue appears white on a mammogram—and can be indistinguishable from a cancerous tumor, which also appears white on a mammogram.

Receiving a call back from the radiologist because of areas of concern from a mammogram can be extremely upsetting and frightening. Although the majority of call backs and biopsies result in reassurances that no cancer is present, the experience is fraught with anxiety and fear. Frequent call backs have left many women with dense breasts less likely to have important yearly mammograms.

3D Mammography (Tomosynthesis) provides better results for women with dense breasts

3D mammography, called tomosynthesis, is able to unmask cancers that may be hiding in dense tissue by showing a three-dimensional, layer-by-layer picture of the breast. Since the details are more visible, and not hidden by overlapping tissue as in a flat, 2D mammogram, invasive breast cancers can be detected using tomosynthesis with greater accuracy and with *40% fewer false positives and 15% fewer callbacks*.

What if a likely cancer is detected using 3D/Tomosynthesis?

If the radiologist believes that the 3D mammogram shows a likely cancer, you will be scheduled for a biopsy to determine if the area of concern is truly cancerous. It is important to know that if the area to be biopsied is not readily detected using other methods of guided biopsy (such as ultrasound, MRI or 2D mammography), the biopsy must be able to be performed with a 3D-guided biopsy.

Where can I have a 3D-guided breast biopsy?

Derry Imaging Center, in Derry, New Hampshire is one of only a few facilities in the state to offer 3D-guided breast biopsy. Using tomosynthesis imaging for biopsy guidance allows the localization and

accurate targeting of lesions that can be difficult to clearly detect with traditional stereotactic imaging and biopsy techniques. A 3D-guided breast biopsy is a minimally invasive procedure that uses x-ray imaging technique to gather tissue samples from a breast abnormality. Derry Imaging Center has achieved the distinguished accreditation as a **Breast Imaging Center of Excellence by the American College of Radiologists**. In addition, the radiologists are onsite, board certified, and fellowship trained, including specialized expertise in Women's Imaging, Breast and Oncologic Imaging and Interventional radiology.

Breast Health Nurse Navigators at Derry Imaging Center

Another advantage to having a breast biopsy at Derry Imaging is the care and concern with which each patient is treated. Patients are introduced to one of the Breast Health Nurse Navigators if the findings of a mammogram are of concern. After the radiologist discusses the exam findings and recommendations with the patient, a Breast Health Navigator will begin helping to navigate each phase of the diagnostic and treatment process with the patient. During what may be an anxious time, patients are able to have support in every aspect of their care from the first call back, through the biopsy process, to the diagnosis, and throughout any surgery and follow-up treatment.

Staying on track with yearly mammograms is the best way for women to allay their worries and to ensure ongoing breast health with the earliest possible detection of any abnormalities. Early detection is an important key to positive outcomes.