

# your guide to **BREAST IMAGING**

Breast cancer is very common, affecting one in eight women in the U.S.

Annual screening mammograms starting at age 40 for average-risk women is shown to save lives and reduce the severity of treatments for those diagnosed.

## What is a mammogram?

A mammogram takes images of your breasts using low-dose x-rays. An x-ray machine sweeps over the breast, taking many images from different angles. These images are combined to create a 3D image of the breast which help make it easier for our radiologists (doctors who specialize in looking at images of the body) better see through your breast tissue. Our radiologists will carefully review and interpret the images.

There are two primary types of mammograms - **screening and diagnostic**.

Before you arrive, our breast imaging specialists will review your history to ensure that the most appropriate test(s) are performed.

### Screening Mammogram

A screening mammogram is an exam recommended for women on an annual basis beginning at the age 40. We utilize state of the art technology to better detect breast cancer and reduce unnecessary imaging, performed with our standard of care 3D mammograms, also known as breast tomosynthesis.

This exam checks for breast cancer in people who don't have any breast symptoms. These pictures help detect findings that may be too small to feel allowing for early detection and treatment of breast cancer.

### Diagnostic Mammogram

A diagnostic mammogram is used to further examine a finding detected during a screening mammogram or after sign(s) or symptoms are brought to our attention.

Such sign(s) can include:

- A lump
- Changes in the size/shape of the breast
- Blood / Clear nipple discharge
- Thickening of skin on the breast
- Breast pain (targeted area)

This exam helps assess if these symptoms indicate cancer, requiring additional imaging with multiple views and possible magnification.

For patients with a history of lumpectomy:

- You will be followed with diagnostic mammograms for three years from the date of your surgery and then return to screening.

After the exam, one of our dedicated breast radiologists will discuss the results with you.

## Q&A

### When should I start getting a mammogram?

For women at an average risk of breast cancer and without any current breast concerns, it is recommended to begin annual screening mammogram at age 40 and continued as long as she is in good health. Those at higher risk may need to begin screenings earlier and explore additional screening exams. Even during pregnancy, mammograms are safe.

### What if I have dense breasts?

Having dense breast tissue is normal but may increase your risk of getting breast cancer. Dense breasts make it more difficult for radiologists to spot cancer on mammograms. While mammograms are still the best test available to detect breast cancer, patients with dense breasts may consider additional imaging exams such as breast ultrasound or breast MRI.

### What should I expect on the day of my exam?

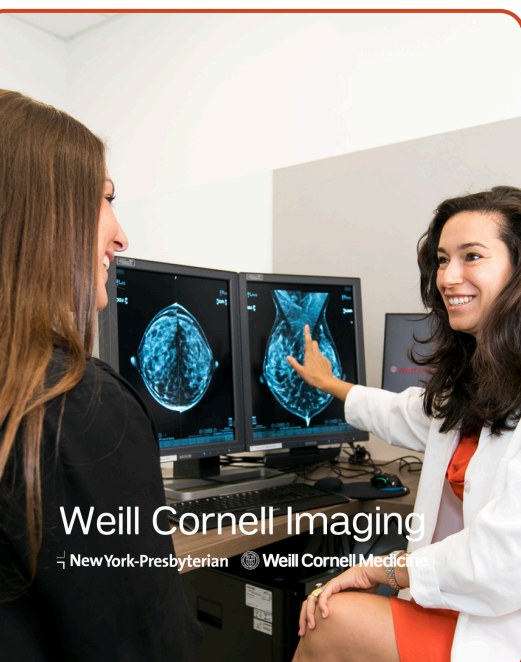
Once you arrive, you will be given a gown to change into and then escorted into the exam room by one of our dedicated breast imaging technologists, the person who will be taking the images of your breasts.

During the exam, your breasts will be pressed gently by a soft specialized paddle on the mammography machine for about 7 to 10 seconds for each needed view. This pressing is important because it helps get a clearer picture of the breast.

### What should I expect after my exam?

We will communicate your results to both you and your doctor.

Through **Connect**, your WCM patient portal, you will have access to your report and images. Visit us at [wciny.org](http://wciny.org) for more information.



Weill Cornell Imaging

NewYork-Presbyterian Weill Cornell Medical Center

**Our breast imaging specialists are pleased to offer consultations to answer your clinical questions and to review available options. If you have any questions regarding breast imaging, please contact us at 646-962-CARE (2273)**



## How do I know if I am high risk?

All women should have risk assessment by **age 25**, especially Black women and women of Ashkenazi Jewish heritage. You can better understand whether you are high risk by asking your doctor about a risk assessment.

### What is involved in a risk assessment?

- Talk with family members about family history of cancer, illnesses, diseases, etc.
- Talk to your provider (primary care physician, gynecologist, etc.) about your family history of cancer and ask for a "breast cancer risk assessment."
- Your provider can help direct you to genetic testing if appropriate.
- Ask us about our Genetics and Cancer Prevention Program.

### What is supplemental screening?

- For most women at high risk, you may need to start annual mammograms between the ages of 25-30, and you will need an additional breast imaging test known as a supplemental screening. The additional test of choice is a breast MRI.
- Women diagnosed with breast cancer prior to age 50 or with a personal history of breast cancer and dense breasts should also have annual supplemental screening with breast MRI.

## Will these exams be covered by insurance?

**Additional insurance or billing questions? Call us at 212-746-6000 option 2**

### Screening breast exams

Screening mammograms and breast tomosynthesis are typically covered at 100% under the Affordable Care Act. However, additional tests like breast ultrasound or breast MRI may not be covered in the same way. Depending on the insurance plan, these additional tests may either not be covered at all, or a patient may be required to pay out of pocket for some costs such as deductibles, co-insurances, or copayments. Please check with your carrier to better understand your coverage benefits.

### Diagnostic breast exams

Diagnostic mammograms, diagnostic tomosynthesis, breast ultrasound and breast MRI are not considered preventative care and are therefore subject to your individual policy benefits to include deductibles, co-insurance and/or co-pays. Please check with your carrier to better understand your coverage benefits that may include out-of-pocket costs.

**To schedule a breast imaging appointment,  
please call 212-746-6000**

## Our Locations

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| <b>1.</b><br><b>Weill Greenberg Center</b><br>1305 York Avenue, 3rd Fl                | <b>2.</b><br><b>Starr Pavilion</b><br>520 East 70th Street, Fl 0    | <b>3.</b><br><b>David H. Koch Center</b><br>1283 York Avenue, 7th Fl |
| <b>4.</b><br><b>Iris Cantor Women's Health Center</b><br>425 East 61st Street, 9th Fl | <b>5.</b><br><b>Midtown East</b><br>416 East 55th Street, Ground Fl | <b>6.</b><br><b>Upper West Side</b><br>2315 Broadway, 4th Fl         |
| <b>7.</b><br><b>Hudson Yards</b><br>504 West 35th Street, 2nd Fl                      | <b>8.</b><br><b>Lower Manhattan</b><br>53 Beekman Street, Ground Fl | <b>9.</b><br><b>Long Island City</b><br>28-25 Jackson Avenue, 2nd Fl |

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