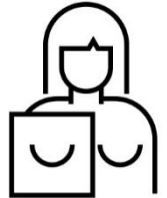


Your doctor has requested you have breast imaging. Please find below information about each examination of the breast that we perform. Your doctor may have requested just one of these examinations or all of them. Your referring doctor knows your medical history and will have referred you for the most appropriate examination(s).

Our staff are happy to answer any questions that you have about how the examinations are performed.

What is a Mammogram?

A mammogram is an X-ray examination of the breasts. This is carried out when a person, their doctor or another health professional discovers unusual signs or symptoms in one or both breasts; that is, a lump, tenderness, nipple discharge or skin changes. The mammogram confirms whether the changes are benign (non-cancerous), and no treatment is needed, or whether the changes indicate possible breast cancer and further tests, and treatment may be required.



You will be asked to undress your upper body; including removing your bra, and then change into a gown. A female Radiographer will perform your mammogram. During the examination, your breast will be exposed and handled by the mammographer. Each breast is compressed between two X-ray plates, this spreads the breast tissue to allow clear images to be taken, this may be a little uncomfortable for a short time. Radiation is used; however, the dose is considered small.



On the day of your appointment, it is important that you do not wear talcum powder or deodorant



The examination takes approximately 30 minutes.

Some of our centres offer Contrast Enhanced Mammography (CEM), CEM maybe used instead of your usual mammogram or in addition to it. It requires an injection of contrast media. If a contrast enhanced mammogram has been requested by your referring doctor, we can provide you with additional patient information related only to that examination.

What is a Breast Ultrasound?

An ultrasound machine uses high frequency sound waves to produce images, it does not use ionising radiation. A breast ultrasound is sometimes used to further evaluate breast abnormalities identified during a physical examination or a mammogram.



You will be asked to undress your upper body; including removing your bra, and then change into a gown. During the examination, your breast will be exposed. Your examination may be performed by a female or a male sonographer. If you prefer a female or male sonographer, ensure you advise our staff when booking your appointment. Please note that this may affect when and where your ultrasound can be performed due to staff rostering and availability.

The ultrasound is performed with you lying on an ultrasound examination table; a triangular sponge may be placed behind your shoulder to roll you slightly onto your side. One breast is examined at a time. Ultrasound gel is applied to your skin, and an ultrasound probe (called a transducer) is placed on the breast and gently moved around the breast to acquire the images. The sonographer will also scan the area in your armpit called the axilla to look for enlarged lymph glands (or nodes), a lump or swelling in the area. A third person may be present during the ultrasound, acting as a chaperone is requested by yourself or the sonographer.



The examination takes approximately 30 minutes.



What is a Breast MRI?

Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) is an imaging test that uses magnetic fields, radio waves and an advanced computer to produce images; it does not use ionising radiation. MRI can produce very detailed images of the breasts. Your doctor may request that you have an MRI performed in combination with a mammogram or an ultrasound.

You will be asked to undress and change into a gown. The magnet in the MRI scanner is strong and you cannot take anything that contains metal into the MRI scanning room. So, you will be asked to remove all jewellery, watches, and your bra. You will usually be asked to remove all clothing except your underwear and to wear a gown.

The MRI is performed with you lying face down on the MRI scanner on a piece of equipment with dedicated areas for each breast to go into, which takes the images and ensures that you are comfortable for the duration of the examination. There is less compression than you experience for a mammogram, and it is not painful. Your breast(s) will be covered during the examination.

A breast MRI usually requires an injection of contrast media. This is administered using an intravenous (IV) line. This is a thin plastic tube placed into a vein, usually on the back of your hand or arm, by the radiographer or nurse before you go into the MRI scanning room.



The examination takes from 45 minutes to 1 hour.