



WOMEN'S  
IMAGING  
CENTER  
RIS at LRH

# BREAST DENSITY



*Know* your body.  
Understand your *options*.

## WHAT IS A DENSE BREAST?

Breast tissue is made up of varying mixtures of fatty tissues, glandular components, lymphatics and blood vessels.

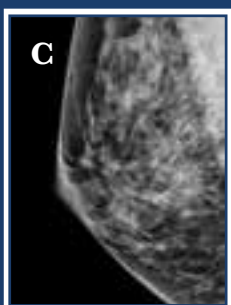
Breast tissue is categorized by mammography in four classifications: A. Predominantly Fat, B. Fat With Some Fibroglandular Densities, C. Heterogeneously Dense and D. Extremely Dense.



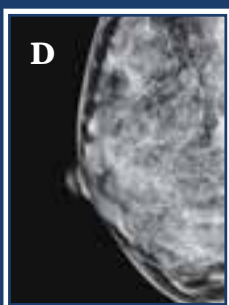
**A**  
Breasts are almost entirely fatty



**B**  
Scattered areas of fibroglandular density



**C**  
Breasts are heterogeneously dense, may obscure small masses



**D**  
Breasts are extremely dense, lowers sensitivity of mammography

## WHY HAVEN'T I HEARD OF BREAST DENSITY BEFORE?

Until recently, most women were unaware of the issue of breast density. Two things have happened in recent years to create greater awareness of this issue. First, advances in technology have made supplemental screening practical and effective. Second, the tireless work of breast density advocates and their systematic effort to pass legislation in every state to require that women be informed of their breast density status. In fact, Florida's breast density law took effect in July, 2018.

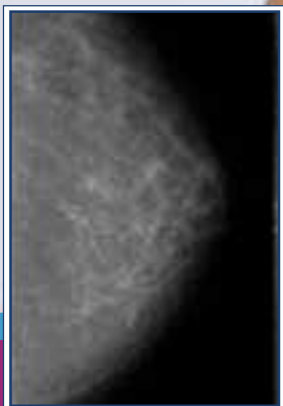
Radiology & Imaging Specialists (RIS) has taken a proactive stance on this issue, leading the way in notifying and educating women who may be at risk, as well as providing supplemental forms of screening for breast cancer detection.



## AM I DENSE?

Breast density is common. Almost half of all women have varying degrees of dense breast tissue. It simply means you have a higher ratio of glandular to fatty tissue. However, early detection with mammography can be a challenge for women with dense breasts. Glandular tissue appears white on a mammogram, but so does cancer. A small tumor is easier to spot on the darker background of a fatty breast mammogram, but more difficult on the white background of a glandular or fibrous breast mammogram.

Mammography is the gold standard for breast screening, and eventually, a mammogram would find these cancers when they grow larger over time. However, since doctors and women's health advocates universally agree that earlier detection is the key to survival, women with dense breasts require a supplemental screening option.



Less Dense



More Dense



***In case you're wondering, you can't know that you have dense breasts just by how they feel; breast density must be measured during a mammogram.***

## WHAT FORMS OF SUPPLEMENTAL SCREENING ARE AVAILABLE?

For women with dense breasts, it is recommended that they receive automated whole breast ultrasound screening and continue to do so every year their breasts are considered dense. For many women, it is an excellent and cost-effective screening tool that can help detect more cancers—and smaller cancers— than mammography alone. Ultrasound has been used effectively in breast cancer diagnoses for years. Clinical studies have shown that ultrasound screening significantly increases the ability to find smaller, earlier stage cancers before they spread to the lymph nodes. These studies have demonstrated that, when combined with mammography, automated whole breast ultrasound screening effectively doubles the detection rate of breast cancer.

In addition, ultrasound is comfortable, convenient, and does not expose the patient to any additional radiation.



## HOW DOES AUTOMATED WHOLE BREAST ULTRASOUND SCREENING WORK?

This exam is separate from your screening mammogram and uses the same ultrasound machine that is used for diagnostic or OB/GYN procedures. The sonographer/mammographer will scan and record the images and our radiologist will review and interpret those images.

During the exam, you will lie on a comfortable table and relax with one arm over your head. A technologist will uniformly guide an ultrasound probe over your breast. As the breast is scanned, the images will be stored for later interpretation by one of our specially trained radiologists.

The entire exam takes about 30 minutes and requires minimal breast compression. A report will be sent to your referring physician and you will receive a letter with the findings. Further evaluation may be recommended as a result of this screening exam. If this is the case, your physician will contact you to discuss your options.

*To learn more or to make an appointment,  
please call 863-688-2334.*

# HOW DO I KNOW IF AUTOMATED WHOLE BREAST ULTRASOUND IS RIGHT FOR ME?

This supplemental examination to mammography is ideal for women who have dense breast tissue as determined by your most recent mammogram. It is safe for women with breast implants, as well as women who are pregnant, may be pregnant or who are nursing. If you would like to know more, just ask our patient representative. A prescription from your physician is required for this exam.

# DOES INSURANCE COVER THIS EXAM?

Insurance usually covers preventive care examinations. You may wish to check with your provider to see if they will reimburse you for this procedure. If they do, we are happy to provide you with the necessary documentation required for submittal.

Fortunately, this is a relatively inexpensive screening and is affordable to have on an annual basis. If you're interested, just ask our front desk for more information, including the cost of the exam.



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