Mammograms: Concern for Comfort

There are a lot of reasons women put off having their annual screening mammograms. One of the biggest complaints are that patients find compression uncomfortable or even painful.

Why is it important that we must compress?

- Compression helps to spread out the normal fibroglandular (dense) tissue of the breast making it easier for radiologists to see through the breast tissue and detect abnormalities that might be hidden by the overlying tissue.
- If the breast is not well compressed, overlapping tissue can look like a mass or abnormality. This can increase the likelihood of a patient getting called back for additional images.
- The more the breast is compressed, the less radiation exposure the patient will receive.
- Compression helps reduce motion. Accidental patient movement or breathing motions can result in unclear or blurry images.

How long does the compression last during a mammogram?

Our certified technologists position your breast on the mammogram unit. Once properly in place on the platform, your breast is gradually compressed with a plastic paddle **for only a few seconds**.

The intent is to do this as comfortably as possible while ensuring adequate compression by reducing motion and radiation.

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