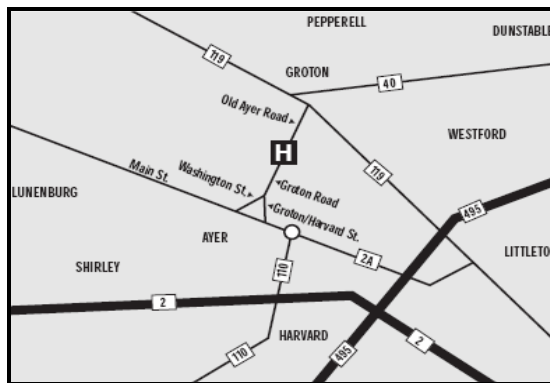


How to prepare for the exam:

- Do not wear deodorant, powder or lotion under your arms or on your breasts. They can appear on your mammogram as calcium spots.
- Tell your doctor and the technologist of any breast symptoms or problems that you have been experiencing.
- If you had any mammograms at other facilities, bring copies of the films with you so that the radiologist can compare the results.

This brochure is intended to provide basic information to our **Mammography** patients. If you have any remaining questions about your exam, please consult your physician.



From the NORTH:

SOUTH on Rt.495 to Littleton Common/Groton Exit 31, Rt. 119. Head WEST toward Groton on Rt. 119. Left on Old Ayer Rd., just before Groton Center. Old Ayer Rd. becomes Groton Rd. Travel 2.0 mi. Hospital is on the right.

From the SOUTH:

NORTH on Rt.495 to Rt.2 WEST. Follow Rt. 2W to Ayer/Harvard Rt.110 Exit 38B. Follow to 110 to Ayer rotary, turn right off rotary onto Main St., immediately beyond McDonald's. Follow Main St. .3 mi. Take first Right, onto Groton-Harvard Rd. Go straight at blinking red light. At Stop sign bear right onto Groton Rd. Hospital is on the left at the top of the hill.

From the WEST:

Follow Rt.2 E to Ayer/Harvard/ Rt.110 Exit 38 B and follow directions "from the South".

From the EAST:

Follow Rt.2 W to Ayer/Harvard/Rt.110 exit 38 B and follow directions "from the South".

Your appointment is scheduled for

DATE: _____

TIME: _____

**PLEASE ARRIVE 15 MINUTES EARLY AT
OUT-PATIENT REGISTRATION**

Please be sure to follow prep instructions and bring your order.

10-29-08/jat

Mammography

Knowledge is the Best Defense



Nashoba Valley Medical Center
Mammography
200 Groton Rd.
Ayer, MA 01432
Ph: 978-784-9272
Fax: 978-784-9550

How Does Mammography Work?

Mammography is a low dose X-ray that is used to take images of the breasts. Doctors use it to help detect and diagnose breast disease in women.

Nashoba Valley Medical Center uses digital mammography along with Computer Aided Detection (CAD) for every mammography exam.

Digital mammography, also called full-field digital mammography (FFDM), is a mammography system in which the x-ray film is replaced by detectors that convert x-rays into electrical signals. These detectors are similar to those found in digital cameras. The electrical signals are used to produce images of the breast that can be seen on a computer screen or printed on special film similar to conventional mammograms, but with greater sensitivity. From the patient's point of view, having a digital mammogram is essentially the same as having a conventional film screen mammogram.

Computer-aided detection (CAD) systems are used in conjunction with digital mammography images. The computer software then searches for abnormal areas of density, mass, or calcifications that may indicate the presence of cancer. The CAD system highlights these areas on the images, alerting the radiologist to the need for further analysis.

What are the common uses of Mammography?

Screening Mammography

Mammography plays a central part in early detection of breast cancers because it can show changes in the breast up to two years before a patient or physician can feel them. Current guidelines from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the American Cancer Society (ACS), the American Medical Association (AMA) and the American College of Radiology (ACR) recommend screening mammography every year for women, beginning at age 40. Research has shown that annual mammograms lead to early detection of breast cancers, when they are most curable and breast-conservation therapies are available.

NO ORDER IS NECESSARY FOR SCREENING MAMMOGRAPHY

Diagnostic Mammography

Diagnostic mammography is used to evaluate a patient with abnormal clinical findings—such as a breast lump or lumps—that have been found by the woman or her doctor. Diagnostic mammography may also be done after an abnormal screening mammography in order to evaluate the area of concern on the screening exam. Diagnostic Mammography is recommended for patients with implants or history of breast, ovarian, cervical, or colon cancer.

IF YOUR DOCTOR SENDS YOU FOR A DIAGNOSTIC MAMMOGRAM, YOU MUST HAVE AN ORDER SIGNED BY YOUR PHYSICIAN TO HAVE THE TEST PERFORMED.

What should I expect during and after the Exam?

You will feel pressure on your breast as it is squeezed by the compression paddle. Some women with sensitive breasts may experience discomfort. If this is the case, schedule the procedure when your breasts are least tender. Be sure to inform the technologist if pain occurs as compression is increased. You must hold very still and may be asked to keep from breathing for a few seconds while the x-ray picture is taken to reduce the possibility of a blurred image. The technologist will walk behind a wall or into the next room to activate the x-ray machine. When the examination is complete, you may be asked to wait until the radiologist determines that all the necessary images have been obtained. **You may also be contacted to return for additional testing. This is very common and does not always indicate a problem. These extra tests are to ensure accurate diagnosis and results.** The examination process should take about 30 minutes depending on the need for extra images.

Who interprets the results and how do I obtain them?

A radiologist, a physician specifically trained to supervise and interpret radiology examinations, will analyze the images and send a signed report to your primary care or referring physician, who will discuss the results with you. You will also be notified of the results by the mammography facility by letter.

PLEASE CALL THE DIAGNOSTIC IMAGING FILE STAFF AT 978-784-9000 EXT 4286 TO MAKE ARRANGEMENTS TO PICK UP YOUR IMAGES ON DISC OR FILMS.