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# press release

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## **Sharon Hospital Announces Installation of CADstream™ Technology: Offering New Early Detection Method for Breast Cancer**

Sharon Hospital Use of CAD system Enhances Breast MRI Analysis

**Sharon, CT** - A new advance in breast MRI analysis is now available in Women's Imaging at Sharon Hospital. Underlining our commitment to providing the best in women's healthcare, every breast MRI performed at Sharon Hospital is processed through CADstream™, a computer-aided-detection system (CAD). The CADstream system helps physicians read MR images more efficiently, provide more standardized breast MRI data and create enhanced reports for referring physicians and patients.

"Although our current methods of analyzing breast MR studies are effective, CADstream is significantly improving the ability of our hospital to provide better patient care by streamlining the interpretation of breast MRI", stated Dr. Gaines, Chief of Radiology at Sharon Hospital.

Magnetic resonance imaging or MRI is a non-invasive imaging procedure that is used to analyze the inside of the breast. MRI does not use X-rays to make images; instead, MRI creates images through a combination of steady and changing magnetic fields and pulsing radio signals. Recent reports have shown that MRI can detect small breast lesions that are sometimes missed by mammography. MRI can also effectively image dense breasts, usually found in younger women, as well as breast implants.

CADstream was developed by Confirma, Inc., a medical image processing company focused on enhancing workflow, data analysis, and quality control in radiology clinics. The Company's headquarters, research and development facilities are located in Kirkland, WA. For more information visit [www.confirma.com](http://www.confirma.com) or [www.sharonhospital.com](http://www.sharonhospital.com).

# Media/Patient FAQs

## **What is breast MRI?**

Breast MRI uses magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) to look specifically at the breast. It is a non-invasive procedure that doctors can use to analyze the inside of the breast. Each exam produces hundreds of images, cross-sectional in all three directions (side-to-side, top-to-bottom, front-to-back), which are then read by a radiologist. No radioactivity is involved, and the technique is believed to have no health hazards in general.

The hope is that such non-invasive studies will contribute to physicians' knowledge of the behavior of tumors, and in turn assist in the selection and monitoring of breast cancer treatments. Breast MRI is an evolving technology and should not replace standard screening and diagnostic procedures (clinical and self exams, mammogram, fine needle aspiration or biopsy).

MRI has been shown to detect small breast lesions that are sometimes missed by mammography, and MRI can successfully image the dense breast (usually found in younger women) and breast implants.

## **Why haven't I heard about breast MRI?**

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved MR breast imaging in 1991 for use as a supplemental tool, in addition to mammography to help diagnose breast cancer. While the total number of breast MRI studies remains low compared to mammography, there has been a 40 percent increase in the number of breast MR studies since 1999. In addition, recent studies support the use of MRI for breast cancer staging and screening. With more than 8.5 million women estimated to be at high risk for breast cancer in 2001, the number of breast MRI studies is expected to grow rapidly over the next five years.

## **What is the procedure like?**

For MRI of the breast, the patient lies on her stomach with both breasts hanging freely into a cushioned recess containing the signal receiver (also known as the breast coil). The entire bed on which she is lying is advanced into the opening of the MRI (a tube-like machine that looks like a giant donut and is open at both ends). The subject is asked to lie still for up to 15 minutes at a time while the computer acquires the images; the total examination is made up of several scans, usually 5 to 15 minutes in length and the patient is usually in the MRI for 40 to 60 minutes.

### **How do I know if I am a good candidate for breast MRI?**

Your primary physician can make the best determination if you are a good candidate for breast MRI. However, you will usually fit one of the following profiles:

- Breast cancer history: personal or family (especially premenopausal cancer in first degree relative--mother, sister, or daughter)
- BRCA mutation present
- Prior breast cancer in either breast
- Personal history of other, non-breast cancers (especially Hodgkin Lymphoma)
- Personal history of organ transplant (kidney, heart, lung, etc.)
- Hormone replacement therapy
- Previous biopsy-proved hyperplasia with cellular atypia or lobular carcinoma-in-situ
- Women with dense breasts

### **What are the primary benefits of breast MRI?**

- Able to image breast implants and ruptures
- Highly sensitive to small abnormalities
- Used effectively in dense breasts
- Can evaluate inverted nipples for evidence of cancer
- Can evaluate the extent of breast cancer
- Can help determine what type of surgery is indicated (lumpectomy or mastectomy)
- May detect breast cancer recurrences and residual tumors after lumpectomy
- Can locate primary tumor in women whose cancer has spread to axillary (armpit) lymph nodes
- Can spot or characterize small abnormalities missed by mammography
- May be useful in screening women at high risk for breast cancer, according to recent studies

### **How do computer systems enhance breast MRI?**

Medical devices known as computer-aided-detection or CAD systems, can automate tasks developed to enhance the interpretation of breast MR studies. The first system of its kind, CADstream™, by Confirma, Inc., has received 510k clearance from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and is currently being used in some of the nation's leading academic and private practice radiology centers.

Surgeons may also use information from CADstream-processed breast MRI studies to help visualize the size and location of a tumor(s) during surgery.

Photos of CADstream images attached.

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