



PATIENT UNDERSTANDING

Mammography is the most sensitive screening test available to detect breast cancer. Although it has been proven to be able to reduce breast cancer mortality rates by at least one-third, MAMMOGRAPHY IS NOT 100% ACCURATE.

Some of the reasons breast cancer may be missed are:

- **BREAST COMPOSITION:** The "denser" your breasts are, that is, the more fibrous and glandular tissue you have relative to the amount of fat in your breasts, the harder it is for mammography to detect masses. Breasts tend to become less dense with age.
- **COMPRESSION:** Compression is necessary for optimal imaging and to reduce the amount of radiation you receive. At Texas Breast Specialists, our patients remain in control during mammograms. Compression may be somewhat uncomfortable, but if it starts to cause pain, let your technologist know and she will not apply additional compression.
- **BREAST CANCER TYPE:** There are several types of breast cancer. Although many breast cancers can be detected when they are no bigger than a grain of sand, unfortunately, a few may grow very large and not produce any suspicious abnormality on the mammogram. Other cancers may produce mammographic findings but they are not suspicious initially. Finally, some breast cancers mimic non-cancerous abnormalities in every way, both mammographically and physically.
- **IMPLANTS:** The presence of implants reduces mammographic accuracy, particularly if they are hard from scar formation. The compression used for mammography could cause rupture of an implant. This is an uncommon event but the possibility is real, particularly for older implants or fibrous capsule around them. Only the amount of compression needed for diagnostic images will be applied, but no guarantee can be made concerning rupture. If you have any concerns, have them addressed to your satisfaction prior to proceeding with mammography.

Because neither mammography nor any medical test can be relied upon to detect all breast cancers, women are strongly encouraged to practice their monthly breast self-examination. Even if your examination today reveals nothing statistically suspicious, if you or your doctors remain concerned about any breast abnormality, or you become concerned after today, you are advised to have additional evaluation or seek another opinion promptly.

I understand that a mammogram will expose me to radiation as with any X-ray examination. I understand the radiation can harm a fetus, and I agree to advise the technologist immediately prior to the mammogram if I am pregnant or may be pregnant.

I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE ABOVE INFORMATION.

SIGNATURE: _____ **DATE:** _____