

New Breast Care Technologies Help Save Lives

Making the Mammogram More Comfortable, Precise. **By Rebecca Durfey, Director of Imaging Services, Salt Lake Regional Medical Center**

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IF THE WORD “MAMMOGRAM” makes you cringe, two new technologies at Salt Lake Regional Medical Center (SLRMC) will come as a welcome relief. Together, they’re making today’s mammograms much more comfortable, convenient and precise.

THE NEW AND IMPROVED MAMMOGRAM

The first component – digital mammogram technology – represents a significant advancement in the ability to diagnose breast cancer. If you’ve never had a digital mammogram, you might be wondering, “What’s the difference between this and a more traditional mammogram?”

Whereas a traditional mammogram displays images on a large piece of film (analog), the technology behind a digital mammography instantly allows a radiologist to look at images on a computer, zoom in and adjust contrast levels to get a better read on problem areas of the breast. These digital images can be enhanced, magnified or manipulated. Since the images are

electronically stored, they can be transmitted from one location to another, allowing breast specialists in different locations to study them. And since the equipment uses high-resolution images instead of film, radiation levels are lower than a traditional mammogram.

Most importantly, the results are 28 percent more reliable than traditional

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mammograms in women under 50 or who have dense breast tissue, according to the American College of Radiology.

“Digital technology is the most advanced mammography you can get to diagnose breast cancer,” said W. Robert Brinton, MD, a radiologist at SLRMC.

NOT YOUR MOTHER’S MAMMOGRAM

In addition to recently incorporating this next-generation digital technology, Salt Lake Regional Medical Center has made the process of receiving a mammogram more comfortable. They now offer the MammoPad, a foam

insert that provides cushioning and warmth between the mammography plate and the breast. This addresses the two most common complaints women have about getting mammograms: It is cold, and it hurts.

Clinical studies show three out of every four women experience an average 50 percent decrease in discomfort with the

MammoPad. While the cushion provides comfort, it does not compromise the high level of image quality needed for a routine mammogram or require increased radiation doses during the mammogram.

“Some women avoid getting regular mammograms because of the discomfort associated with it,” said Dr. Brinton. “We believe that by minimizing the pain, more women will get their regular mammograms, which in turn will save lives.”

BEATING BREAST CANCER

A woman has a one-in-eight chance of developing breast cancer in her lifetime. Each year in the United States, 190,000 women are diagnosed with breast cancer, and 40,000 of those women succumb to the disease.

But if detected and treated early, breast cancer has a high survival rate. Digital mammograms are key, detecting lumps 90 percent of the time. And now that

MammoPads are making mammograms more comfortable, Salt Lake Regional physicians are hopeful more women will receive the test, increasing the chances for early detection and successful treatment.

Breast cancer can spread fast. That's why doctors at Salt Lake Regional Medical Center are working to spread the news about more comfortable, advanced mammograms. For more information or to schedule a mammogram, call 1-866-431-WELL. ■

WHO TO CONTACT

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Meet the imaging team at Salt Lake Regional Medical Center (left to right): Cari Bryant, Kandie Call, Julie Sullivan, Kristi Palmer, Tamara Mesesan.



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