Patient Information
Tests and Procedures

Mammogram
Digital Mammography is an x-ray examination of the breast. It is used to detect and diagnose breast disease. The procedure allows detection of breast cancers, benign tumors and cysts before they can be detected by touch. Digital mammography provides electronic images of the breasts that can be enhanced by computer technology, stored on computers, and even transmitted electronically in situations where remote access to the mammogram is required.

With computer-aided detection (CAD) systems, a digitized mammographic image is analyzed for masses, calcifications, or areas of abnormal density that may indicate the presence of cancer. The images are highlighted by the CAD system for further analysis by the radiologist.

- **How do I prepare for the test?**
  You should avoid using deodorant, powder, creams, lotions or perfumes on the underarms or breasts on the day of your mammogram because they can show up on x-rays and look very much like cancer when they do.

- **What happens when the test is performed?**
  You will be asked to undress from the waist up. For most patients, 2 pictures will be taken of each breast – one from the side and one from the top. Before each picture is taken, your breast will be pressed briefly between 2 flat plates so that the breast tissue is spread out. This part of the mammogram is uncomfortable, but it does not last long and it is necessary in order for the x-ray to show a clear view of all areas of the breast.

- **How long is it before the result of the test is known?**
  You will receive a letter with your results from our Mammography Department.

If there is anything we can do to make you more comfortable while in the Radiology Department, please do not hesitate to ask.