

Mammography Tomosynthesis 3D Imaging Information Brochure

Q: What is a Tomosynthesis?

A: **Breast tomosynthesis, or 3D mammography**, is a technique using xrays to produce a three dimensional picture of the breast. It results in the production of slices through the breast which can be viewed as individual pictures. This often clarifies whether a finding is a true abnormality or an overlap of normal structures, and can result in the visualization of abnormalities that would be hard or impossible to see otherwise.

Q: How does the 3D Tomo differ from the traditional 2D images?

A: Standard, or 2D mammograms, consist of one picture of the breast in each position, as opposed to many slices. Overlapping breast tissue can make the 2D images difficult to interpret.

Q: How are the 3D images obtained?

A: The 2D and 3D images for each view of the breast are obtained during a single breast compression. To obtain the 3D images, the machine moves in a 15° arc. A 2D image can be created from the 3D slices so no additional image is required. Compression will last for just a few seconds longer than for a standard mammogram without tomosynthesis, but most patients will likely not notice a difference.

Q: Who should get breast tomosynthesis?

A: Patients with dense breast tissue may benefit more from the added modality than those with more fatty breast tissue, but even fatty breasts are better evaluated with tomosynthesis.

Q: What about radiation exposure?

A: Although 3D imaging has a slightly higher dose than traditional 2D, the total dose is still within the acceptable MQSA guidelines set forth by the FDA.

Q: How do I get a 3D mammogram?

A: The referring clinician can order it, or the patient can request it at the time of the scheduling.

Q: Is tomosynthesis offered at both the Torrance and San Pedro campuses?

A: At this time, we are offering Tomo at the Torrance Women's Imaging Center with plans to expand this to the San Pedro campus in the future.

Q: Is there literature or studies I can review to learn more?

A: The AJR and JAMA websites list:

<http://www.ajronline.org/doi/abs/10.2214/AJR.14.12642>

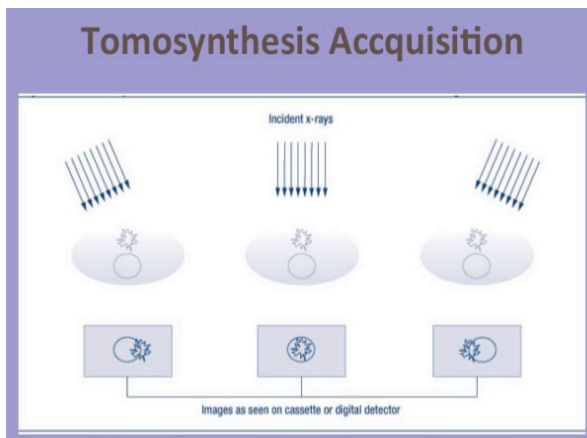
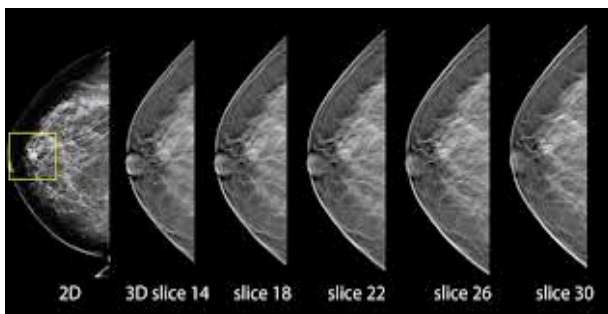
<http://jama.jamanetwork.com/article.aspx?articleid=1883018>

Q: Do insurance companies cover this?

A: As of this moment, CMS and Cigna cover this exam. Other insurance carriers are still working through this. We suggest patients check with their insurance for full details.

Q: Is there anything patients can do if their insurance company doesn't cover tomo?

A: The State of California – Health and Human Services Agency – Department of Managed Health Care has a process called Independent Medical Review (IMR) form that may be filed by the patient that will result in a decision within 30 days. This form is a FREE consumer complaint process to ask for an inquiry with the insurance company. It may result in the insurance company paying for the cost of the exam. Forms are available on WWW.HealthHelp.ca.gov website. The Help Center is at 1-888-466-2219. The online form is available on the website under Featured Links “Independent Medical Review/Complaint Form.



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**Mammography
 Tomosynthesis 3D Imaging
 Information Brochure**

**Common Questions
 and Answers to help
 you understand
 Tomosynthesis 3D
 Mammography**