

Breast Imaging

San Radiology & Nuclear Medicine



breast ultrasound patient information

SO YOU NEED A BREAST ULTRASOUND. YOU MAY LIKE TO KNOW...

Your doctor will likely have discussed the request for us to perform an ultrasound of your breasts. If you are under 40 years of age, a breast ultrasound is often the first imaging test performed to investigate a symptom or sign. If you are over 40 years of age, an ultrasound is often performed in combination with a mammogram.

WHAT IS ULTRASOUND?

An ultrasound can be performed on almost all parts of the body, and uses high frequency sound waves to produce images rather than using x-rays. The breast is well suited to being imaged with ultrasound. Because ultrasound uses different technology to look at the breast, it provides different and additional information to a mammogram.

What are the advantages?

Ultrasound is a painless examination and there is no radiation involved. No injection is required and some movement is not usually a problem.

In breast imaging it is often used in combination with mammography to evaluate and further define a symptom such as a lump. It can also be used to guide a biopsy when necessary.

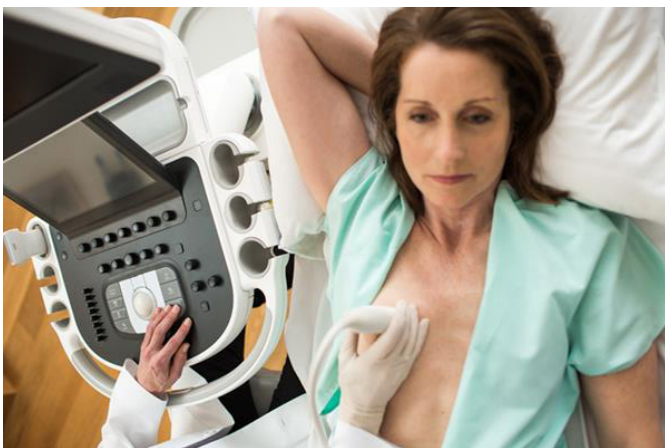


Image courtesy of Philips Healthcare Australia & New Zealand

HOW IS AN ULTRASOUND PERFORMED?

Ultrasound is performed by trained health professionals who are either sonographers or radiologists (doctors trained in medical imaging). At the San we have radiologists who have subspecialist expertise in breast imaging.

Gel is first applied to the breast. This is because ultrasound cannot see through air – even the small amount between the skin and the ultrasound device (called a transducer) is enough to adversely affect the image. Your sonographer will move the ultrasound device over the breast to examine it and take images.

You will typically be lying down on an examination bed, with your arm resting above your head on a pillow, and you may be asked to roll up on to your side a little with the assistance of a pillow or sponge.

How long does it take?

The examination usually takes about 30 minutes. The sonographer will check the images and may talk to the radiologist before you leave.

Sometimes the radiologist will come in and either look at the imaging on the screen or perform part of the examination. It can be helpful to see some things 'live' during your examination, rather than just as still images. Please do not be alarmed if this should occur. During this review our staff will keep you well informed of what they are doing and why.

What do I need to do for the test?

Wearing a shirt with a skirt, shorts or trousers is usually more comfortable for you, as you will then only need to remove your shirt and bra.

If you have had prior breast imaging elsewhere (mammography, ultrasound or MRI of the breasts), please bring these imaging studies and the reports with you.

FURTHER INFORMATION

San Radiology & Nuclear Medicine provides personalised diagnostic breast imaging services. Contact San Radiology on **(02) 9480 9850** for further information and to make an appointment.

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