

# FAQs:

# BREAST ULTRASOUNDS

## BREAST ULTRASOUND

### WHEN IS ULTRASOUND USED?

ULTRASOUND IS NOT A ROUTINE SCREENING TEST, BUT IT HELPS WHEN:

- A lump is felt but not seen on a mammogram.
- Mammogram images are unclear.
- Breast tissue is dense.
- Providers need to tell the difference between a cyst (fluid-filled) and a solid mass.
- Ultrasound can also guide a biopsy needle if a sample is needed.

### DOES BEING SENT FOR AN ULTRASOUND MEAN I HAVE CANCER?

- No.
- Ultrasounds are ordered for many non-cancer reasons .

### WHAT HAPPENS DURING THE TEST?

- Wear a 2-piece outfit and remove your top and bra.
- Do not use deodorant, lotion, or powders on the chest or breast area .
- A gel is applied to the skin.
- A handheld “wand” is moved over the area to create pictures using sound waves
- Takes about **30 minutes**.
- Final results are usually available to your provider within **1–3 business days**.

These do not replace mammograms or other screening recommendations. Ask your provider for more information.

## SCREENING RECOMMENDATIONS: HIGH-RISK WOMEN

### WHO IS CONSIDERED HIGH RISK?

#### YOU MAY BE HIGH-RISK IF YOU:

- Have a first-degree relative with a BRCA1 or BRCA2 mutation.
- Had genetic syndromes like Li-Fraumeni, Cowden, or Bannayan-Riley-Ruvalcaba.
- Had chest radiation before **age 30**.
- Have a lifetime breast cancer risk of **20–25%+** based on risk assessment tools.

### WHAT SCREENING IS RECOMMENDED?

- Breast MRI + mammogram every year, usually starting around **age 30**.
  - Breast MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) uses radio waves and strong magnets to make detailed pictures of the inside of the breast.
  - MRI is used in addition to, instead of, a mammogram.
- The MRI creates pictures of soft tissue parts of the body that are sometimes hard to see using other imaging tests.
- Women with lifetime risk under **15%** should not use MRI for routine screening. Unless ordered by your physician.

### TALK WITH YOUR PROVIDER

Screening decisions should always include a conversation with your doctor about:

- Your age.
- Your personal and family history.
- Your lifestyle and medical risk factors.
- Your preferences and concerns.
- Which test is right for you.

