

Breast Ultrasound

Breast ultrasound, or breast ultrasonogram, is a procedure that is used to check for breast problems. A breast ultrasound uses harmless sound waves and a computer to create pictures of the inside of your breast.

This procedure can help determine whether a lump in your breast is a fluid-filled sac (*cyst*), a solid tumor, or a growth. It can also help determine whether a tumor is cancerous (*malignant*) or noncancerous (*benign*). Sometimes a breast ultrasound is done to locate nodules in the breast that are too small to feel but need to be removed during surgery. A breast ultrasound takes about 30 minutes.

Tell a health care provider about:

- Any allergies you have.
- All medicines you are taking, including vitamins, herbs, eye drops, creams, and over-the-counter medicines.
- Any blood disorders you have.
- Any surgeries you have had.
- Any medical conditions you have.

What are the risks?

Breast ultrasound is safe and painless. Ultrasound imaging does not use X-rays. There are no known risks for this procedure.

What happens before the procedure?

You do not need to prepare for a breast ultrasound. You will undress from your waist up, so wear loose, comfortable clothing on the day of the procedure.

What happens during the procedure?

- You will lie down on an examining table.
- A health care provider will apply gel to your breast area.
- You may be asked to hold your arm above your head.
- The health care provider will move a handheld probe, which looks like a microphone, back and forth over your breast.
- The probe will send signals to a computer that will create images of your breast.
- When the procedure is over, the gel will be cleaned from your breast, and you can get dressed.

What happens after the procedure?

- You can go home right away and do all of your usual activities.
- It is up to you to get the results of your procedure. Ask your health care provider, or the department that is doing the procedure, when your results will be ready.

Summary

- A breast ultrasound is a procedure that is used to check for breast problems.

- This procedure uses harmless sound waves and a computer to create pictures of the inside of your breast.
- This is a safe procedure.

This information is not intended to replace advice given to you by your health care provider. Make sure you discuss any questions you have with your health care provider.

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