

Mobile Mammogram of Hartford Hospital.

Mobile Mammogram only offers bilateral mammograms to the community. We advise that those who had previously received 3D mammograms the year before, continue to receive 3D mammograms.

Bilateral mammograms vs. 3D mammograms

When you're deciding how you want the procedure performed, you have two types of mammograms to choose from.

The bilateral and 3D mammogram processes are nearly identical from the patient's perspective. Both methods function on one breast at a time, compressing the tissue with a paddle to maximize the X-ray image quality with minimal radiation. While a 3D mammogram may take slightly longer, both methods typically take [about 10 minutes](#).

While bilateral and 3D mammograms are functionally the same for the patient, there are significant differences for the radiologists and doctors who interpret the information.

Bilateral mammography

Bilateral mammograms represent the standard or traditional type of mammography. In these, the mammogram machine x-rays the breast tissue from a top and side view. Since a bilateral screening mammogram only shows the breast tissue from two angles, there's little compensation for overlap. In addition to fat, breasts contain supportive tissue, blood vessels, ligaments, milk-processing glands, and ducts. When these overlap on an X-ray, they can obscure tumors and other signs of breast cancer, leading to false negatives. The overlap can also appear to be a tumor itself, leading to a false positive.

3D mammography

While bilateral mammograms take one image from the top and one image from the side, 3D mammography takes many.

A 3D mammogram machine moves in an arc to take multiple low-dose X-rays of the breast from different angles. Those images combine into a picture composed of different views, producing a three-dimensional model for doctors to review. Rather than trying to interpret overlapping tissues from a single perspective, they can shift to a different view to identify the parts of what they see.

This more detailed image makes it easier to find breast abnormalities even within dense surrounding tissue. It also allows radiologists to understand the location, shape, and size of those abnormalities, helping them identify which are benign and which are potential tumors.

3D mammography's high-quality images and comprehensive modeling [offer several benefits](#):

- **Improved breast cancer detection:** 3D mammography lets doctors and radiologists view the breast from multiple angles. In doing so, they can spot cancers that dense breast tissue might otherwise obscure. This method also helps them find small cancers earlier. Earlier detection can lead to quicker treatment and smaller removal sites, with lower mastectomy risk.
- **Fewer false positives:** The mammogram's three-dimensional modeling allows doctors to view the breast at different angles, helping them rule out areas of overlap.
- **Reduced callbacks and follow-up imaging:** A more comprehensive array of images offers a greater opportunity for doctors to interpret the X-rays correctly. With sufficient data from the initial mammogram, they can draw their conclusions more confidently.

Reduced patient anxiety: Greater confidence from the doctor