

What to Expect While You Are In Our Office

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Welcome to Breast Care Specialists

We are a **diagnostic facility** – that means that we do not do regular screening mammograms. We take care of people who have problems with their breasts and people who are at risk for breast cancer. If we solve your breast problem we will release you to have a screening mammogram when you are next due. There are many facilities in the area that do excellent screening mammograms and we will assist you with scheduling if you ask.

You are anxious – We understand

We understand that most people are very anxious when they come to our facility. Whether you are here because you feel a lump, or have had an abnormal mammogram elsewhere, or have a personal or family history of breast cancer, please know that we will take the time to do a thorough job in caring for you. And it does take time.

Please try to relax and know that just because it is taking a long time that it does not mean that there is something terribly wrong with you. Our average office visit is three hours or more. Where do we get three hours?

Review of your Outside Records	15 minutes
Check In / Paperwork completion	15 minutes
History & Information gathering	15 minutes

Mammogram (average)	20 minutes
Ultrasound (average)	20 minutes
Physician Consultation	30 minutes
Possible biopsy scheduling	20 minutes
Total wait time between services	30 minutes

165 minutes (3 hours and 15 minutes)

We try to schedule you for what you will need when you make your appointment but sometimes we do not know what you will need until you arrive and are assessed by our team.

What to expect

The Pre-Assessment. A must have! We will ask you a lot of questions! We actually use all of this information to assess your problem and decide how to take care of you. We know it takes a lot of time and effort. Thank you.

After your paperwork is filled out we will talk with you about it to clarify any questions we may have, or any questions you may have.

Your Health History is recorded and then you will be taken back and asked to change into a gown and have a seat in our back waiting area.

Mammogram. If you need a mammogram we will do that first. We know that no one likes mammograms! But, mammograms save lives. Compressing the breast is necessary to find cancer. Our mammographers are highly skilled and have saved many lives. Please treat them with the respect they deserve.

After your mammogram we sometimes need to take you back for another mammogram view. *This does not mean you have cancer!* Sometimes it is just to get another look from another angle, and sometimes to get a better look at a certain spot, or maybe you breathed and the picture is a little blurry. It is not uncommon, please try not to worry.

A mammogram may be the only imaging you need. If your breasts are dense or there is an area we need to investigate you may also have an *ultrasound*.

Ultrasound. Ultrasound uses sound waves to look at the breast tissue. With ultrasound, gel is applied to the breast and an ultrasound technician slides the transducer over the breast in order to take images of the area where you may have felt something or an area that another physician may have questioned. Ultrasound is good for telling whether a nodule is fluid filled like a cyst, or a solid lesion. Solid lesions can be benign or malignant.

Our Office Works as a Team. Please know that our office works as a team. While you are waiting, your mammogram is being sent digitally to the Radiologist by the Mammography who performed your mammogram and spoke to you about your breasts. Our team of highly qualified mammographers and ultrasonographers are skilled diagnosticians themselves! They have been trained by our physicians to manage the initial workup of all of our patients to ensure that you are provided with comprehensive services while you are here.

The Diagnostic Radiologist reads your mammogram and decides what you may need next – this could be additional views of one or both breast or an ultrasound to correlate a finding of benign breast tissue or an area of suspicion. Remember, even though your physician may not be a Radiologist – you are receiving a highly skilled radiological consultation as part of the review of your history and imaging. Our Radiologists are in constant communication with your physician, either your Surgeon here in our office, or your outside referring physician.

There is much going on while you are waiting. We are a complex operation and we are thorough. We want you to leave here with as much information as possible – this is what sets us apart from other physicians in the Atlanta area – you get it all in one visit rather than multiple visits to multiple physicians before you have a resolution. Your breast health and patient satisfaction are our main priority!

If you have concerns about where we are in the process of evaluating you, please ask for your physician's patient coordinator.

The Physician Consultation. After your imaging is complete you will be placed in an exam room and your doctor will talk to you about your imaging and do a breast exam (sometimes your doctor will do an exam before your imaging). If you brought a support person with you they can come back with you at this time.

A Biopsy May Be Recommended. If there is an area that needs a needle biopsy, we are able to do that procedure here in the office. We usually schedule the biopsy for another day when your doctor does procedures in order to allow for insurance pre-certification, and to allow sufficient time of the procedure. Our Surgery Scheduler will meet with you and schedule a time that is convenient for you.

Biopsies are minimally invasive and allow you to resume normal activity after leaving our office. We have a separate brochure for each kind of biopsy so that you can leisurely read about the biopsy procedure and what to expect.

“Needle biopsy of the breast is a simple, accurate and less invasive procedure used to quickly identify malignant lesions. It has revolutionized the way we diagnose breast disease.” - Christine Murphy, M.D.

If you need a Surgical Consultation. You may have seen a Surgeon as part of your visit today or one of our Radiologists. If you are being followed by one of our dedicated-breast Radiologists and they would like for you to see one of our surgeons, we will try to make this introduction for you before you leave our office. We will schedule another visit for you to see the Surgeon of your choice. Your Radiologist will discuss your case with the Surgeon prior to your visit and your medical record will be updated to reflect the surgical consultation.

If at the end of your visit we have come to the conclusion that you do not have a breast problem, or that we have solved your problem, and that you are not at high risk for breast cancer, we will have you return to a screening mammogram at one of the facilities locally that do an excellent job.

Your Comments are Important

If you experience problems within your visit today, please ask to speak to our Clinical Manager or our Administrator. Either one wants to hear your concerns and address any obstacles to your patient satisfaction. Remember, you are our first priority!