

Dedicated Breast MRI

Your doctor has referred you for a MRI of your breast. At the Breast Center, we use the Aurora system. The Aurora® 1.5T Dedicated Breast MRI System with Bilateral 3-D SpiralRODEO™ is the first FDA approved, fully integrated MRI system designed specifically for breast imaging.



Dr. Steven E. Harms is recognized nationally in the area of magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and was named “Komen Foundation Scientist of the Year”

by Susan G. Komen for the Cure in 1998. He was formerly on the faculty at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS), Baylor University Medical Center, and M. D. Anderson Cancer Institute. During his 14 years as director of MRI at Baylor, Dr. Harms and his research team developed MRI applications including RODEO Breast MRI. He helped draft the 2007 American Cancer Society breast cancer screening guidelines which recommend breast MRI screening for high risk patients. Dr. Harms is a fellow of the American Society of Breast Imaging and has been on the Best Doctor’s in America®

since 2003. Dr. Harms practices at The Breast Center in Fayetteville, Arkansas and continues to be a clinical professor at UAMS.



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Your Breast MRI Exam

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What is Magnetic Resonance Imaging?

MRI is a sophisticated technology that uses a computer, magnetic field and radio waves – instead of x-rays – to produce images of the body. MRI has been safely used for decades to provide information to help in the early diagnosis and treatment of disease.

MRI of the breasts has emerged as a new technique in the evaluation of breast disease. When used in conjunction with conventional x-ray mammography, breast MRI can provide valuable information for the detection and characterization of breast disease. MRI doesn't replace mammography – it's a different imaging technique that provides additional information.

Breast MRI is ideal for a wide range of indications in breast disease management:

- Characterize lesions
- Detect occult cancer
- Determine the extent of cancer
- Monitor cancer therapy
- Evaluate patients with positive surgical margins for residual cancer
- Exclude the existence of cancer in high-risk women
- Evaluate implant integrity and detect cancer in women with breast augmentation

What is a breast MRI exam like?

The Aurora is designed specifically for your comfort. During the exam, you will lie on your stomach with your breasts placed in openings in the Aurora examination table so that they're suspended away from your chest. Unlike conventional x-ray mammography, breast MRI doesn't require your breasts to be compressed, so you shouldn't experience any discomfort. Plus, you'll enter the machine feet-first, which reduces feelings of claustrophobia sometimes associated with full-body MRI scanners.

You'll receive an injection (usually in the arm) of a contrast enhancement agent called gadolinium that helps to highlight various structures in breast tissue. The gadolinium is administered through a small intravenous catheter which is placed by a certified technologist.

An initial scan will be taken and then repeated after the gadolinium is administered. For best results, you should lie very still, relax and breathe normally. The technologist can see and hear you at all times. The entire exam takes about 45 minutes.

How do I prepare for the test?

No special preparation is required. You can eat a light meal, engage in regular activities, and take any prescription medication prior to your exam. Plan to arrive about 30 minutes before your appointment time. You'll be asked to wear no metal from the waist down and to change into a gown since

belts, zippers, snaps, and thread in clothing may contain metal that disturbs MRI signals.

We'll ask you questions before you enter the MRI exam room to confirm that you don't have any contraindications to MRI exam.

Please leave all jewelry at home if possible. You'll have to remove all metallic objects such as glasses, hairpins, and dentures (personal belongings can be locked in your dressing room). Please be sure to tell the technologist if you have metal implants, a cardiac pacemaker, permanent dental bridges, braces or other metal objects. Please bring any previous studies with you.

What about after the test?

There are no side- or after-effects with MRI, so you can resume your normal activities as soon as your exam is over. The radiologist will interpret your MRI scan and report the findings to your doctor.

Does insurance cover breast MRI?

Most major health insurance carriers cover breast MRI. If your health plan requires you to have a written referral for this type of exam, please be sure to obtain the necessary paperwork prior to your appointment so that we can bill your carrier directly.

Questions?

If you have any questions about breast MRI or your exam, please call us at 479-442-6266 between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.