

## Having a Mammogram



Radiology Department

**This leaflet provides you with information about our mammography service (breast x-ray). It explains what is involved and who you will meet.**

## **The Radiology Department**

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Radiology is also known as X-Ray or the Imaging Department. It is the place in the hospital where radiological examinations of patients are undertaken using a range of equipment.

## **Who will I meet?**

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- **Receptionist/Clerical Staff:** help you make, or change your imaging appointment and ensure your correct details are on our computerised work system when you arrive for your appointment.
- **Radiographer:** a female radiographer will take your mammogram x-ray. She will be able to answer some questions but will not give you your results, or comment on the images taken. She will ensure that the images taken are of the highest quality for a written report to be sent to your Consultant/GP.
- **Radiologist/Breast Clinician:** a specialist doctor trained to interpret breast x-ray images. They will report your results to your consultant/GP.

## **What is a Mammogram?**

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A mammogram is an x-ray examination to show the tissues of the breast. It is carried out using a digital mammography unit.

The x-ray images are kept in a digital form on computer and viewed on a screen.

A mammogram remains one of the most accurate methods of breast imaging.

## **Are there any risks in having a mammogram?**

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There are some small risks involved with having x-rays taken as ionising radiation is used. The amount of radiation is equal to that we all normally receive from the environment over a short period of time.

Your consultant or GP will have determined that the risk of not having the mammogram would be greater than the risk from the examination.

If you have any queries about the need for this test or other alternative tests, please contact your referring doctor.

Female patients who are, or might be pregnant, or who are currently breast feeding should telephone the department before the appointment date.

## **What preparation is required?**

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It is important that you do not wear talcum powder, deodorant, antiperspirant, perfume or body lotion on your breasts or under your arms.

Please tell the radiographer if you have breast implants.

Please note we have no provision for child care.

## **Is there an alternative breast imaging examination?**

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If you are under 40 you will be offered breast ultrasound as an initial examination but you may also need a mammogram should our radiologist or the breast clinician think it is necessary.

## **Can I bring a relative or friend?**

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Yes, but for reasons of safety, they will not be able to accompany you into the x-ray room; except in very special circumstances.

## **What should I do when I arrive?**

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Please report to the reception desk in the Radiology department.

Your details will be checked and entered on the Radiology computer system.

You will then be asked to take a seat in the waiting area before being called into the mammography room.

## **What does the mammogram entail?**

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Once you are in the privacy of the mammogram room, the radiographer will explain the procedure to you and obtain verbal consent from you before starting the examination.

You will then be asked to undress to the waist and stand in front of the x-ray machine.

The radiographer will place each breast in turn, onto the mammogram unit. As each image is taken, your breast will be compressed between the x-ray plates. You will feel a firm pressure on your breast, which releases automatically, as soon as the x-ray exposure has finished. The compression is necessary to stop movement blurring the image and to reduce the amount of radiation needed to produce the images.

Two or more images of each breast are taken from different angles.

Although the radiographer will stand behind a screen, you will be in full view and can be heard at all times, if you have a problem during the examination.

## **Will the mammogram hurt?**

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Some people find the pressure on the breast uncomfortable, however the process lasts only a short while. Tenderness in the breasts can make the procedure more uncomfortable.

## **How long will the procedure take?**

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For most patients, four images will be taken and your appointment will last for about 15 minutes.

## **Are there any side effects?**

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No, you will be able to drive afterwards and can return to work as required.

## **When will I get the results?**

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If you are referred by the breast clinic your x-ray images will be available immediately at the clinic and your consultant will inform you of the results.

In most clinics the specialist radiologist will provide a report on the images for your doctor.

If you are attending for a routine follow up appointment, then your results will be sent to you at your home address as well as to your hospital specialist. This can take up to 3 weeks but most patients will get their results within 10 days to 14 days.

If you are a GP referred patient, then the results will be sent to your GP for you to collect after 2 weeks.

## **Privacy and dignity**

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We will try to make your visit to our department as comfortable as we can. You will see only female staff in the mammogram room.

We hope that the information in this leaflet will answer any questions you may have but please feel free to contact us if you have any particular worries, questions or concerns.

## Patient survey

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We value your opinion about the service we provide. Please help us to improve the service by answering the voluntary questionnaire included with your appointment letter.

## Reference source(s):

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### **Reference RCR (Royal College of Radiologist)**

[https://www.rcr.ac.uk/system/files/publication/field\\_publication\\_files/BFCR%2813%295\\_breast.pdf](https://www.rcr.ac.uk/system/files/publication/field_publication_files/BFCR%2813%295_breast.pdf)

### **NHS choices - Ultrasound**

<http://www.webmd.com/women/guide/breast-ultrasound#1>

**For further information about Diagnostic Imaging Services at Royal Surrey County Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, please contact:**





Royal Surrey County Hospital NHS Foundation Trust  
Egerton Road  
Guildford  
Surrey  
GU2 7XX

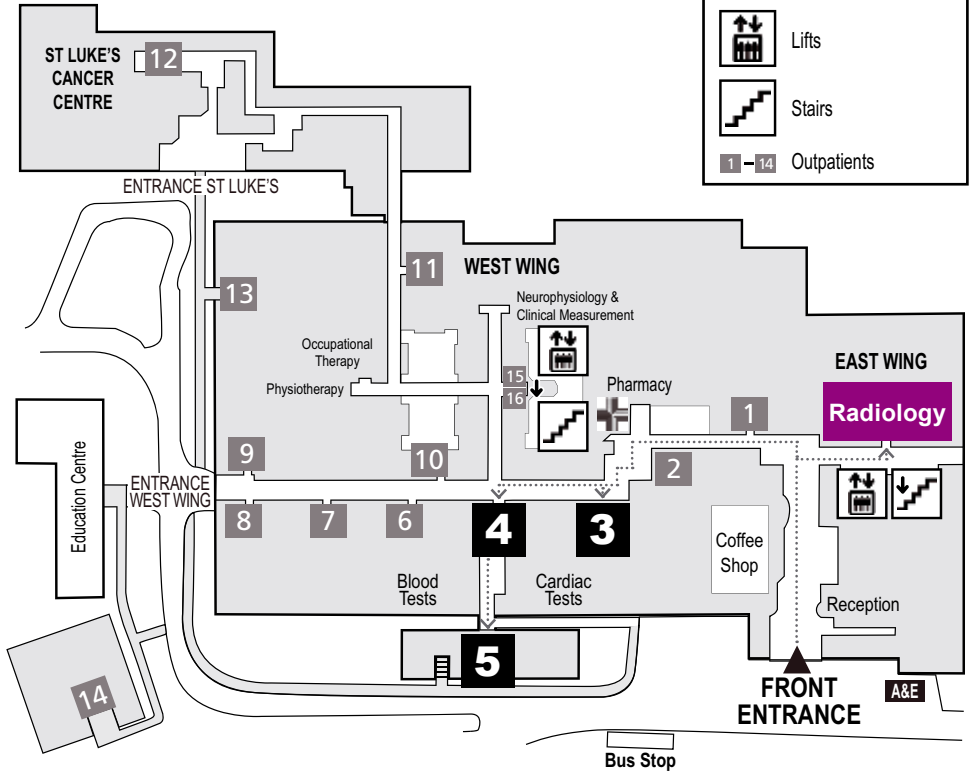
**[www.royalsurrey.nhs.uk](http://www.royalsurrey.nhs.uk)**

# How to find the Radiology Department

Royal Surrey County Hospital map  
**Level B (Ground floor)**

**KEY**

-  1 To clinics on next floor (above or below)
-  Lifts
-  Stairs
-  1-14 Outpatients



## Contact details

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If you have any questions or would like to know more about mammography, please contact the Radiology Department on:

**Telephone:** 01483 571122 **ext** 2050 or

**Direct line:** 01483 464150, 9am–5pm

**If you are unable to keep your appointment, please contact us as soon as possible.**

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## PALS and Advocacy contact details

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Contact details of independent advocacy services can be provided by our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) who are located on the right hand side as you enter the main reception area. PALS are also your first point of contact for health related issues, questions or concerns surrounding RSCH patient services.

**Telephone:** 01483 402757

**Email:** [rsc-tr.pals@nhs.net](mailto:rsc-tr.pals@nhs.net)

**Opening hours:** 9.00am–3.00pm, Monday to Friday

If you would like information documents in large print, on tape or in another language or form please contact PALS.

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Future review date: October 2019

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