

Breast Ultrasound

What is a breast ultrasound?

Ultrasound, also called sonography, is an imaging technique that uses high-frequency sound waves to outline a specific part of the body. The echo of the sound waves produces a picture called a sonogram.

Some of the reasons for breast ultrasound include:

- To evaluate a breast lump found through an exam or mammogram or if there is some other reason to suspect a possible abnormality. It is useful to determine whether a breast lump is solid or fluid filled.
- To evaluate the breasts in younger women because their breast tissue is often more dense, and a mammogram may not show sufficient detail.
- To monitor the growth of a cyst or guide the placement of a needle to drain a cyst.
- To evaluate your breast if you have breast implants.
- To evaluate breast symptoms such as pain, redness and fever.

How do I prepare for a breast ultrasound?

Wear something that is comfortable and two-piece since you will be removing your clothing from the waist up. On the day of your exam, do not use any lotions, ointments, creams or powders to your breasts. If you are only having an ultrasound, you may use deodorant.

How do I schedule a breast ultrasound?

You may call to schedule your appointment yourself or if you would rather, your healthcare provider's office may handle this task. *An order from your healthcare provider is required prior to performing the procedure.* If your healthcare provider has given you the order, make sure to bring it with you to your appointment.

To schedule your breast ultrasound at St. Luke's Breast and Bone Health, call Centralized Scheduling at 319/369-8129.

Any previous mammogram exams and breast ultrasound exams as well as the reports are needed before doing the exam.

Where do I come for a breast ultrasound?

St. Luke's Breast and Bone Health is located at 855 A Avenue NE, Suite 400. This is also known as the Medical Office Plaza or MOP building. Make a point to be at St. Luke's Breast & Bone Health about 15 minutes before your scheduled appointment. Park in the parking ramp connected by the skywalk to the MOP building or free valet parking is also available at the front of the building.

What can I expect during a breast ultrasound?

The ultrasound is done by a special technologist, called a sonographer. A gel-like solution, which conducts sound waves, is applied to the skin of the area to be examined. The sonographer will then place a “transducer” against the breast to be examined. The transducer transmits and receives sound waves that are electronically converted into a “picture” projected on a special screen much like a TV set. Photographs of the image (picture) are taken for further study.

- The breast ultrasound usually takes about 30 minutes.
- When the examination is completed a radiologist analyzes the images.
- The findings are sent to your healthcare provider who will notify you of the results.
- If you are scheduled during our diagnostic clinic, you will receive your results prior to leaving.