

*Stereotactic Breast Biopsy
Patient Prep
Information*



Cannon Memorial Hospital
Watauga Medical Center

Table Weight Limits for each facility		
	Cannon Memorial Hospital	Watauga Medical Center
MRI 1 (High Field)	350 lbs.	440 lbs.
MRI 2 (Open)		490 lbs.
CT 1 (VCTXT)		500 lbs.
CT 2		450 lbs.
CT Scan Table	450 lbs.	
Diagnostic x-ray room 1	300 lbs.	300 lbs.
Diagnostic x-ray room 2		300 lbs.
Diagnostic x-ray room 3		300 lbs.
Diagnostic ER x-ray		460 lbs.
Nuclear Medicine	400 lbs.	440 lbs.
Ultrasound		500 lbs.
Ultrasound Stretcher	500 lbs.	
Outpatient/Lab Center X-ray		460 lbs.
Dexa scan		350 lbs.
Dexa table	300 lbs.	

Scheduling / General information

- All Imaging exams must be scheduled with the scheduling department with exception to some diagnostic radiology exams.
- To schedule an appointment please contact our scheduling department at 828-268-9037 between the hours of 8:00am-5:00pm. If you reach the voicemail please leave a detailed message and someone will answer your call as soon as possible.
- On the day of your exam please arrive 15 minutes prior to your exam time to register at outpatient registration.
- To have an imaging exam done there must be a physicians order.
- According to the patient preps for certain exams, lab results should be available prior to the exam.

If you have any questions about your exam please call the Imaging Department

Watauga Medical Center: (828) 262-4153

Watauga Medical Outpatient Imaging/Lab Center:
(828) 266-2498

Cannon Memorial Hospital: (828) 737-7620

General description of each Imaging department

- **Radiography (“X-Ray”)** – Uses x-rays to create images.

X-rays created in an x-ray tube pass through a patient to reach the ‘image receptor’ (‘cassette’). The cassette is then inserted into a computed radiography ‘reader’ that converts the energy absorbed by that cassette into a visible image seen on a computer. Radiography best visualizes bones, lungs, and contrast-filled organs (i.e. GI tract, kidneys). Radiography can be used in conjunction with or to enhance another modality, i.e. injecting a joint with contrast before an MRI is obtained or injecting contrast into the spinal canal before a CT is obtained. The contrast media used is usually barium, iodine, or air, depending on the study being performed.

- **Computed Tomography (“CT”)** – Uses x-rays to create images.

Multiple x-rays of ‘slices’ or planes of the body are obtained and reconstructed by a computer to form an image. CT is frequently performed for patients with trauma, kidney stones, cardiac issues, suspected stroke or pulmonary embolism, or abdominal pain. Biopsies are also frequently performed using CT to guide the radiologist. The contrast media used can be orally-ingested barium, IV iodine, or rectally-induced air, depending on the area to be imaged. CT can be used to visualize bone or soft tissue.

- **Magnetic Resonance Imaging (“MRI”)** – Uses a strong magnetic field and radio waves to create images. The patient lies on a table within a strong magnetic field with a ‘coil’ placed over the body part of interest. The body emits ‘signals’ in response to changes in the magnetic fields, which are transmitted by the coil to a computer. The computer converts these signals to images of planes (‘slices’) of the body. Gadolinium is the most frequently used contrast agent used. MRI is best for visualization of soft tissues.

- **Ultrasound (“Sonography”)** – Uses sound waves to create images. High-frequency sound waves are sent through the patient’s body and the ‘echoes’ are converted by a computer into images. The patient may be asked to be NPO or have a full bladder so that these ‘echoes’ may be enhanced. Ultrasound is often used to guide biopsies of soft tissue organs. Ultrasound is used to visualize soft tissue structures.

- **Nuclear Medicine** – Uses ingested or injected radioactive materials to create images. The patient is given either an orally or intravenously administered radioisotope that targets a specific part of the body. The patient is then (after a specified period of time) placed under a ‘camera’ which detects the radiation emitted by the patient’s body. A computer then converts those detections to an image. Nuclear medicine is used to assess a specific system function and is not used to image anatomy.

- **Mammography** – Uses x-rays to create images of the breast. X-rays are produced in an x-ray tube, which pass through a patient’s breast to a detector. The detector absorbs the x-rays and converts them to an electrical signal which is then converted by a computer into an image. It is used as a screening exam for detection of breast cancer and also for diagnosis of breast lumps, microcalcifications, etc. It may also be used to guide placement of localization devices such as wires or needles in a breast prior to surgery, as well as to image breast tissue removed during surgery. Watauga Medical Center only offers mammography at Outpatient Imaging/Lab Center. Cannon Memorial does mammography at the hospital.

- **Bone Densitometry (“Dexa”)** – Uses x-rays to measure bone density. A ‘pencil-beam’ (tightly restricted x-ray beam) is used to scan the lower back and the hip. The beam passes through the body and a detector absorbs the energy of the x-ray beam. That energy is then converted to a non-diagnostic image and a numerical value, providing a calculation of bone density. That calculation is also compared to other age groups and to previous scans a patient may have had. This modality is only used to diagnose osteoporosis or osteopenia. There is not a preparation prior to this exam. Watauga Medical Center only offers Dexa scans at the Outpatient Imaging/Lab Center. Cannon Memorial offers Dexa scans at the hospital.

Stereotactic Breast Biopsy

A stereotactic breast biopsy is performed by a surgeon and radiologic technologist as a method of obtaining breast tissue samples and, in many cases, can allow the patient to avoid surgery. This outpatient procedure uses x-rays and a computer to determine the exact location of a mass or calcifications within the breast. Small samples of breast tissue within the area of concern are removed through a small incision and sent to the laboratory for analysis and the results are usually available within a week.

What to Expect:

- **NOTE:** Please inform the surgeon if you have any allergies or are taking any blood thinners. Your surgeon may ask you to withhold your blood thinners for 3-7 days prior to the procedure.
- You will be asked to undress from the waist up and put on a gown that opens in the front. You will lay face-down on a special table with the affected breast through an opening in the table. The breast is then compressed with a small plate (similar to a mammogram). It is very important that you not move during the procedure so that the breast remains immobile.
- Your breast will be numbed with a local anesthetic and a small incision made. Small samples of breast tissue are removed through the incision.
- After the procedure is completed, a small tissue marker will be placed within the breast to identify the location of the biopsy. Steri-strips or stitches are used to close the incision.
- Patients are usually asked to rest for the remainder of the day after the procedure. Bruising, some swelling, and minimal pain are to be expected. Your surgeon and technologist will discuss follow-up care with you.