

Digital Mammography Now Available at CRMC Outpatient Service Center

Area women now have more convenient, easier access to important technology designed to improve their breast health. On June 1, Cortland Regional Medical Center (CRMC) added digital mammography to its services in its Outpatient Service Center, located on the West Road Campus in Cortland. Digital mammograms provide patients with optimal breast imaging and comfort, while using a lower x-ray dosage.

In the spring of 2007, CRMC installed its first digital mammography system, the MAMMOMAT *Novation*, in the medical center's Imaging Services Department.

“Digital mammography helps CRMC provide the women of Cortland and the surrounding communities with the best possible exams,” said Rosemary Barletta, Director of Imaging and Cardiology Services. “In addition to increased diagnostic capabilities, digital mammography is also designed to reduce the discomfort often associated with mammograms as the need for re-takes and additional pictures is reduced with electronic image manipulation.” Barletta added that since the images are digital and stored on computers, lost or misplaced films are a thing of the past.

According to the National Breast Cancer Foundation, Inc., breast cancer incidence in women has increased from one in 20 in 1960 to one in eight today. If detected early, the five-year survival rate for this disease exceeds 95%. Digital mammography enables physicians and clinicians to better pinpoint the disease and plan treatment.

“Breast self-examination is one of the most important tools for early detection, and regularly scheduled mammograms are not only highly recommended, but can often detect a lesion long before it can be felt,” said Dr. Kirwin Gibbs, a board certified radiologist and Chair of the CRMC Radiology Department. “With our digital mammography system, screening and diagnosis all can be performed on a single unit, while both image quality and dose exposure reduction achieve an optimum level.”

A special workstation enables the radiologist to view the patient's digital mammogram via a powerful computer with high-resolution monitors. Magnifying, and changing the contrast, windows, and levels of the image enable the radiologist to see the abnormalities at a better advantage. These features are particularly helpful when the radiologist is consulted on surgical cases. In addition, there is a computer aided detection (CAD) system, which is built into the computer workstation, which serves as a "second opinion" for the radiologist.

Along with digital mammography, the CRMC Outpatient Service Center provides patients with X-ray, ultrasound, CT scans, MRI, bone densitometry, and physical therapy services.

*For more information on scheduling a digital mammogram
call the CRMC Outpatient Service Center at 758-7620.*

