

***Schedule your appointment with  
Charlotte Radiology.***

Any and all breast health concerns should be discussed with your primary physician first. Our breast services are completely comprehensive, from diagnostic mammography and breast MRI to needle biopsy and more.

For annual screening mammograms, no physician's referral is required. And breast experts still agree that 40 is the age to start. **Please make a point to schedule screening mammograms every year, and urge all of the women in your life to do the same.**

**704.367.2232**

**877.362.2232 (toll-free)**

**For more information about Charlotte Radiology,  
visit us online at [CharlotteRadiology.com](http://CharlotteRadiology.com).**



**BREAST LUMPS**

**Screening Saves.**

## Understanding Breast Lumps

Finding a breast lump can be alarming, but it does not necessarily mean you have breast cancer. A breast lump can result from many benign conditions including fibrocystic changes, a cyst or fibroadenoma. But it's best to play it safe. **If you feel a breast lump, notice changes in the breast skin or nipple discharge, contact your physician for immediate evaluation.**

### ► FIBROCYSTIC BREAST CHANGES

This common, noncancerous condition is related to the menstrual cycle. Fibrocystic lumps tend to be smooth, rounded and mobile since they are not attached to breast tissue. They can be tender to the touch and increase or decrease in size during the menstrual cycle. This condition is most common among women between the ages of 30 and 50 and tends to subside after menopause.

Having fibrocystic breasts is not a risk factor for breast cancer. But women with fibrocystic breasts often have dense breast tissue, which can make it difficult to detect some cancers with standard examination and mammography. Charlotte Radiology offers 3D mammography, which increases visualization and minimizes the impact of overlapping tissue. This is the best technology available for women with dense breast tissue.

Recommendations to manage fibrocystic breast changes may include:

- Wearing extra support bras
- Avoiding caffeine
- Taking oral contraceptives
- Taking over-the-counter medications, such as aspirin
- Maintaining a low-fat diet rich in fruits, vegetables and grains
- Applying heat to the breasts
- Reducing salt intake
- Taking diuretics
- Taking Vitamin E, B6, niacin or other vitamins
- Taking prescription drugs

### ► CYSTS

Cysts are fluid-filled masses in the breast, unlike cancerous masses, which are solid. Cysts are very common and are rarely associated with cancer. Ultrasound is the best way to differentiate a cyst from cancer, because sound waves pass right through a liquid-filled cyst but bounce off of a solid lump.

Cysts can make self-examination difficult, since it's hard to feel around and behind them. For women with multiple cysts, routine mammographic screening is recommended. Ultrasound is often used if the screening mammogram shows a change, or if a woman complains of a new mass.

In some cases cyst aspirations are recommended to remove fluid with a hollow needle and a syringe. This is performed under ultrasound guidance, often to confirm whether a lesion is cystic or solid or to relieve discomfort from a painful cyst.

### ► FIBROADENOMAS

The most common kind of breast mass, especially in young women, fibroadenomas are mobile, solid, rounded lumps made up of normal breast cells. While not cancerous, these lumps may grow. And any solid lump that's getting bigger is usually removed to ensure it's not cancer. If the lump causes discomfort or is bothersome cosmetically, a patient may elect also to have it surgically removed.

### *Needle biopsy for breast lumps*

Sometimes a biopsy is necessary to determine whether a breast lump is benign or cancerous. At Charlotte Radiology, we realize a needle biopsy can be emotionally stressful. Our staff is trained to make this safe, minimally invasive procedure as comfortable and quick as possible. These are generally covered by insurance.

