**Diagnostic mammography and Tomosynthesis**

Diagnostic mammography is done to diagnose a breast problem, such as a lump or suspicious area, or a suspicious nipple discharge (bloody or watery, not milky). The problem may be found by the woman, during a clinical breast examination or at screening mammography.

Diagnostic mammography is more thorough and takes a little longer than a screening mammography. It provides more detailed images and views of the breast are taken from different angles.

These views include:

- **Spot compression (also called cone compression)** may be used to provide special views of one area of the breast during diagnostic mammography. A small compression plate is used to separate the breast tissue in a suspicious area and push normal breast tissue out of the way, giving a clearer image.

- **Magnification views**: The images may be enlarged (magnified) to make it easier to see small suspicious areas. These close-up views help show tiny deposits of calcium (called calcifications) that look like small white spots on a mammogram. The radiologist looks at the size, shape and pattern of calcifications on a mammogram. Calcifications are quite common and most are not associated with cancer. Certain characteristics of calcifications, such as irregular shapes or certain groupings, can be a concern and may indicate the presence of cancer, and will require additional testing with a stereotactic breast biopsy.

- **Digital Breast Tomosynthesis (DBT)**: is a method for performing high-resolution images using a pseudo-3D technique where multiple low dose mammographic images are acquired of the breast at different angles, producing images that are equivalent to one mammogram. DBT can provide a higher diagnostic accuracy compared to conventional mammography by reducing overlap of normal breast tissues. It is often used when an abnormality is identified on a screening mammogram to confirm if it is real or not.

Diagnostic mammography is usually done on both breasts if there is no recent mammogram of the other breast so that doctors can compare the breast tissue of both breasts.