

3 reasons you need a 3-D mammogram

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For many women over 40, a yearly screening mammogram to check for breast cancer is a fact of life—along with the anxiety of waiting for the results. But what if you could get a test that offered better cancer detection, fewer false positives and more peace of mind?

Dr. Robert Maxwell, a Mayo Clinic radiologist, says, with a 3-D mammogram, many women can.

The technology is also called tomosynthesis, and [health care providers](#) say it offers three distinct benefits.

"3-D [mammograms](#) allow us to be more accurate in our ability to detect and diagnose cancer as compared to traditional (two-dimensional) mammograms," says Maxwell.

Two-dimensional screening mammograms provide only two images of the breast: the top and the side.

"A 3-D mammogram would obtain approximately 300 images, as compared to the (two-dimensional) mammogram, which is about four images," says Maxwell.

And that means better cancer detection and fewer false alarms.

"3-D mammograms allow the radiologist to see the breast tissue in greater detail and be able to provide a more certain diagnosis," says

Maxwell.

This is especially valuable for women with dense breasts. They have a higher cancer risk.

"It means greater peace of mind, less anxiety, more accurate diagnosis if they have [cancer](#), more certainty that they don't," says Maxwell.

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