



St. Luke's Imaging Services Patient/Family Information

Nuclear Medicine MBI (Molecular Breast Imaging)

What is Molecular Breast Imaging?

Molecular Breast Imaging (MBI) is a new way to visualize tumors in dense breast tissue. On a mammogram, it can be difficult to differentiate between dense breast tissue and tumors because they both appear white on the image. On a MBI scan, a small amount of radiotracer is injected into a vein in the patient's arm or hand. This tracer is absorbed by breast tumor cells like a sponge and appears as a bright spot on the MBI image.

Preparation:

- You will want to dress in comfortable clothing. A two-piece outfit is usually the easiest because you will need to undress from the waist up. You will be given a soft cape to wear.
- This exam should be scheduled between days 7-12 of the patient's menstrual cycle if she is still menstruating.
- MBI is contraindicated if a patient is taking Tamoxifen or any other anti-estrogen drugs. If a patient is on one of these meds, a radiologist needs to be notified before their exam can be scheduled.
- Before having a MBI exam a mammogram should have been performed within the last year.
- MBI is contraindicated in women under the age of forty or for those women who are pregnant.
- MBI is also contraindicated for any patients who have had a recent cyst aspiration or biopsy of the breast performed. It will be necessary to wait six weeks after these procedures before having the MBI scan.
- When arriving for your exam, please bring your medication list with you.

What Happens During the Test?

- A Nuclear Medicine Technologist and a Mammographer (A Radiologic Technologist who specializes in Mammography) will perform your test.
- You will be asked to undress from the waist up and be given a soft cape to wear.
- The technologist will inject a small amount of a radioactive medicine into a vein in your arm or hand.
- Approximately 5 minutes after your injection a Mammographer will position you for the images.
- You will be sitting in a chair and two images of each breast will be taken.
- The breast is compressed just like a mammogram although with two-thirds less pressure, so it is much more comfortable than a mammogram.
- Each image takes about 10 minutes with a total exam time of about one hour.

Who interprets the results and how do I get them?

A radiologist will review the images shortly after the exam is completed. A written report will be sent to your doctor. Your doctor will discuss the results with you. Please allow your physician the time needed to review the results.

Where do I arrive for a MBI?

You will check in at St. Luke's Breast and Bone Health which is located in the PCI Medical Pavilion at 202 10th St. SE, Suite 265. Please enter through the East entrance and go to the second floor. You may park in the attached ramp or use the complimentary valet parking.

Is this exam covered by my insurance?

The only carrier that currently covers this exam is Medicare. You will be expected to pre-pay for this exam when you arrive 15 minutes prior to your scheduled appointment.