

*Ukiah Valley  
Medical Center*



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**Ukiah Valley Medical Center Announces New Technology  
To Provide Softer Mammograms**

Ukiah Valley Medical Center (UVMC) is now providing the latest in “high tech, soft touch” mammography. The hospital combines full-field digital mammogram equipment with a new breast cushion, which dramatically eases the discomfort many women feel when they get a mammogram.

The FDA-cleared foam cushion, called MammoPad®, creates a softer, warmer mammogram. MammoPad has been clinically demonstrated to reduce discomfort for most women. In addition, the hospital offers digital mammography which has been shown to provide image quality that is actually better for some women.

UVMC is a certified Softer Mammogram Provider, a distinction awarded only to an elite group of healthcare facilities and the only hospital in our region to exclusively provide this service. By offering women a softer mammogram, the hospital hopes to increase the number of area women who follow recommendations for regular screenings. Physician referrals are not necessary and walk-ins are welcome, upon availability.

“The discomfort many women feel during mammography compression is known to be a reason that many don’t get regular screenings,” said UVMC Radiologist Laura Winkle, M.D. In addition to compression, the cold surfaces and hard edges of the mammography device make the experience uncomfortable for some patients.

“The breast cushion answers these complaints by providing a soft, warm cushion for the breast during mammography,” said Dr. Winkle. “Because women are more relaxed during the exam, it makes it even easier for our mammography technologists to get the best possible image.”

The single-use, adhesive-backed foam cushion – developed by breast surgeon Gail Lebovic, M.D. – attaches to the compression plates of both digital and traditional, X-ray film mammography devices. The recyclable breast cushion is “invisible” to X-rays and does not interfere with the image quality of the mammogram.

A recent study sponsored by the National Cancer Institute concluded that digital mammography provides better images than traditional film mammograms for women with dense breasts, those under age 50, and women who are perimenopausal.

“We’re dedicated to creating the best possible experience for our patients,” said Dr. Winkle. “The combination of MammoPad and digital mammography is recognized in healthcare as essential to optimizing mammography and breast health. We’re pleased to be able to offer our patients this important enhancement.”

The American Cancer Society reports women can greatly reduce their risk of death from breast cancer if they receive regular mammograms. For this reason, both the society and the American College of Radiology recommend that women 40 and older receive mammograms yearly. Yet despite the urgency of this message, nearly 40 percent of American women don’t get regular recommended mammograms.

Studies have shown mammography pain is a major reason many women do not return for their annual screening.

The recent development of MammoPad and digital mammography could help reverse this trend. MammoPad has been clinically studied in both the U.S. and Sweden, where evaluations in more than 1,300 patients found approximately 70 percent experienced a significant reduction in pain when the cushion was used.

“Early detection of breast cancer can make the crucial difference between life and death,” said Dr. Winkle. “Mammograms identify lumps that a woman’s self-exam wouldn’t find until an average of 1.7 years later. That is why regular mammograms are the only scientifically proven way to reduce breast cancer mortality. This breast cushion removes a major barrier to women receiving this important procedure. MammoPad plus digital mammograms help ensure that every woman gets the clearest and most accurate possible image. In offering both the breast cushion and digital mammography, UVMC provides the latest in imaging quality and comfort technology.”

For more information or to schedule your mammogram, call UVMC at 707-463-7342.

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*Ukiah Valley Medical Center is part of Adventist Health, a not-for-profit, faith-based health system operating in California, Hawaii, Oregon and Washington. Founded on the Seventh-day Adventist heritage of Christian health care, Adventist Health is comprised of 20 hospitals with more than 3,100 beds, 19,000 employees, numerous clinics and outpatient facilities, 16 home care agencies and three joint-venture retirement centers. For more information, visit [www.uvmc.org](http://www.uvmc.org) or [www.adventisthealth.org](http://www.adventisthealth.org).*