

MOST ADVANCED MAMMOGRAPHY TECHNOLOGY



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**ADVANCED
MAMMOGRAPHY**
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On any given day, you'll find cancer patients and survivors who have found hope and help at Thompson Comprehensive Breast Center, a Covenant Health breast center. You'll also find dedicated Thompson employees supporting patients throughout their cancer journey, like Sue Miller, who works in patient registration. "There's so much good here, so much healing and loving," she says, "and I found that out, firsthand."

Her breast cancer was discovered after a screening mammogram and biopsy. It came as a surprise. "I was just in shock... it was the furthest thing from my mind," she says. "They caught it early, and it was very, very small."

The results from Sue's digital 3D mammography – also known as tomosynthesis – allowed her cancer to be detected much earlier. "It's a newer technology and especially helpful for women with dense breast tissue," says surgical oncologist and Thompson Cancer Network Medical Director Troy Kimsey, MD. "It allows a more detailed look at the breast tissue."

For Sue, cancer meant a change in perspective. Always empathetic to patients in the past, Sue understands even more what they need. "Breast cancer affects everyone pretty much the same," she says. "The women who come in here, they all need that warmth, they need the friendliness, they need to know they're cared for, and I like doing that."

Because her cancer was caught in its earliest stages, she was able to undergo a shorter duration of radiation therapy. "If a woman meets certain criteria with a lower grade, smaller cancer, she may be a candidate for a lumpectomy and partial breast radiation as opposed to whole breast radiation," Dr. Kimsey says.

"In partial breast radiation, a balloon is inserted into the lumpectomy cavity and the radiation oncologist delivers the radiation through that balloon, so there's a higher concentration of radiation around the lumpectomy cavity."

While whole breast radiation usually takes four to six weeks, partial breast radiation takes only five days. Dr. Kimsey stresses that Sue wouldn't have been a candidate for this type of treatment had her cancer not been detected in such early stages. "It can't be emphasized enough that screening mammograms are what allows us to detect early stage disease that is clinically undetectable, and this puts us in a better position with treatments and outcomes."

The Thompson Comprehensive Breast Center is one of ten Covenant Health breast centers throughout East Tennessee. To find the breast center nearest you, please visit www.covenanthealth.com/breast-centers.



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