

# Contrast Enhanced Mammogram (CEM)

## Patient Information

### Leongatha Memorial Hospital Medical Imaging

#### What is Contrast Enhanced Mammography?

Contrast Enhanced Mammogram (CEM) is new technology that provides more information than a standard mammogram and may result in earlier detection of cancers. CEM is performed at the same time with breast tomosynthesis (3D mammogram). CEM uses contrast dye containing iodine, the same dye as used in CT scans.

#### Why might I need a CEM?

Your doctor or our Breast Radiologist may recommend that you have CEM for:

- Screening for breast cancer. CEM may be useful especially for women who are at increased risk for developing breast cancer, for women who have dense breasts, and as an alternative to Breast MRI.
- Evaluating any lumps in your breast(s) that were found during a physical exam.
- For surveillance after breast cancer treatment.

#### Will I need to have other tests with the CEM?

Just like with a standard mammogram you may need to have additional tests to evaluate your CEM exam findings. These may include an ultrasound, magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) or a biopsy.

#### What can I expect during my CEM?

A CEM exam is very similar to having a standard mammogram, however prior to the test a small IV line will be placed in your arm. The contrast dye will be injected while you are seated.

After the injection, we wait two minutes to allow the dye to flow into your breast. The mammographer will then complete the mammogram.

#### What are the risks of CEM?

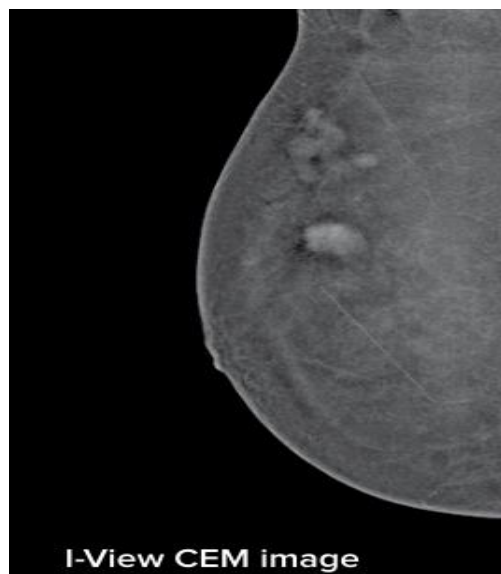
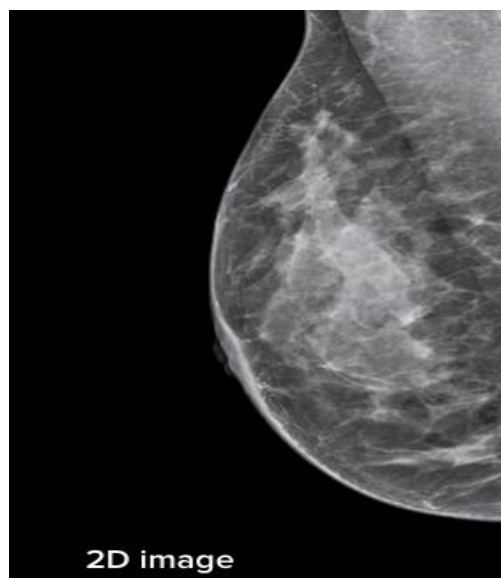
Rarely, people can have an allergic reaction to intravenous (IV) contrast.

Most reactions are mild, such as hives. Some people can have more serious reactions, such as having trouble breathing or facial swelling.

We are well prepared to recognise and treat a potential allergic reaction.

Please contact us if you:

- Have kidney disease
- Have diabetes
- Have an overactive thyroid
- Have experienced an allergic reaction to iodine contrast dye in the past
- Are pregnant or breastfeeding



We will review your referral and determine if CEM is suitable for you.

We may need you to get a blood test or we may perform conventional mammography without contrast if appropriate.

### **Before your CEM**

You need to contact us before your appointment if you have any of the conditions listed above so we can plan your examination and reduce any delays on the day of your mammogram.

Please inform the booking clerk if you are breastfeeding or have breast implants as you may need a longer booking time.

### **The day of your CEM**

Do not use talcum powder or underarm deodorant on the day of your CEM as these can show up on the images.

You may prefer to wear a two-piece outfit (skirt or pants and a top). You will be given a gown but only need to remove your clothes from the waist up.

Ensure you drink plenty of fluids on the day of your appointment as this will make it easier for us to find a suitable vein for the IV line and help your kidneys process the contrast dye.

The contrast dye may cause some mild nausea, so we ask you to fast for two hours prior to your appointment. You can take any medication as normal.

### **During your CEM**

You will be asked some questions about your breast history. A nurse or doctor will insert an IV line in your arm to inject the contrast dye. After 2 minutes, you will have your CEM exam. You may feel a warm sensation as the contrast dye is injected. This is normal.

Let your nurse or mammographer know if you have pain at your IV site or if you feel any unusual symptoms such as itchiness, swelling, dizziness, difficulty breathing, or you feel like you are going to faint. There will be some compression of breast to ensure a clear view of the tissue being examined.

This may cause discomfort but will not last longer than 30 seconds. Images are checked by a Radiologist with specialised training in mammography before you leave. Further images may need to be performed after discussion with the Radiologist.

A CEM exam involves a few more steps than a regular mammogram so the duration of this appointment will be a little longer. This extra time is needed to insert the IV line and inject the contrast dye.

### **After your CEM**

Staff will remove your IV line and ensure you feel well. Drink plenty of water in the 24 hours after your CEM to help remove the contrast dye from your body. The radiologist's report is automatically forwarded to your doctor. Please return to your doctor to discuss the results.

### **Radiation Risk**

Most medical imaging tests, except MRI and ultrasound, involve exposure to radiation from X-rays. Your doctor considers that the benefits of the examination you require to be greater than the small risk posed by the radiation exposure.

Any questions please call or email us:

**Phone:** (03) 5667 5579

**Email:** [medical.imaging@gshs.com.au](mailto:medical.imaging@gshs.com.au)

### **Leongatha Memorial Hospital**

66 Koonwarra Rd, Leongatha



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This information is credited to Inside Radiology, Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Radiologists (RANZCR) | [insideradiology.com.au](http://insideradiology.com.au)  
Created: February 2020 | Reviewed & Updated January 2026