

## **New cancer test at PVH**

### **St. Joseph buys 3D mammography machine, used in early detection of breast cancer**

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Petaluma Valley Hospital received a pricey new mammography machine that will help doctors better detect breast cancer in patients.

The Hologic 3D mammography machine, which St. Joseph Health purchased through the Petaluma Valley Hospital Foundation, cost \$566,000 plus another \$400,000 for construction and installation, according to Colleen Flynn, marketing operations manager for St. Joseph.

The cutting edge device takes a three-dimensional picture of the inside of a breast, allowing radiologists to accurately diagnose breast cancer and reducing the need for additional testing in some patients, according to Norman Shore, area imaging director for St. Joseph.

“We are able to look at different views that weren’t there previously,” he said. “Patients in Petaluma are getting the latest technology.”

The 3D mammography machine uses a technique called breast tomosynthesis, which reveals fine details that may otherwise be hidden. The final images are then converted into a stack of very thin layers, or slices, for the radiologist to review. Conventional 2D mammograms can be limiting due to overlapping layers of tissue, which can sometimes produce unclear results, false alarms, or even cancer being missed.

“This is the most advanced technology for breast cancer screening, and we are thrilled to have it here in Petaluma,” said Todd Salnas, president of St. Joseph Health, Sonoma County. “We are dedicated to providing South Sonoma County residents with compassionate, high quality care, while allowing them to be screened close to home.”

St. Joseph, the current operator of Petaluma Valley Hospital, is planning its exit after a 20-year lease expired. The new machine will stay with the hospital when St. Joseph leaves, Flynn said.

Breast cancer affects one in every eight women in the U.S. over the course of a lifetime. If breast cancer is found early, the five-year survival rate is almost 100 percent.