Roper St. Francis Cancer Center
Leaders in Breast Care

Roper St. Francis Cancer Center is the area leader in comprehensive breast care services, including the newest screening, diagnostic and treatment methods. Our breast cancer patients are at the center of a network of specialists, including board certified radiologists, surgeons, pathologists, medical oncologists and radiation oncologists. We are committed to providing ongoing support and education from the time of diagnosis through survivorship via a team of navigators, dietitians and social workers.

A breast cancer diagnosis is life-changing, but at the Roper St. Francis Cancer Center, we believe that with the best doctors, caregivers and technology, we can beat it.

Did you know?

- Roper St. Francis treats 53% of the area’s breast cancer cases.
- We have four digital mammography locations.
- Our Center offers the state’s most sophisticated breast MRI.
- We are one of the few centers in the US offering the new breast flap microsurgery procedure.
- Our 5-year survival rate is higher than the South Carolina and national average.

Comprehensive Breast Care Centers
One Stop Care

Our Breast Care Centers at Roper Hospital and St. Francis Hospital consolidate diagnostic services, doctor consultations and experienced staff support, all in one place. Women can now come to a convenient, comfortable location and obtain a mammogram. Breast Care Centers are just another way we strive to make your breast care experience as convenient as possible.

Your Annual Mammogram
We Make it Easy

What is digital mammography?
This exciting technology has been proven to improve breast cancer detection in many patients. With digital mammograms, the same images are obtained with the breast in compression, however the digital images allow for improved efficiency, immediate review of images, computer manipulation of images and digital computer storage of data.

Who needs a mammogram?
The American Cancer Society recommends all women age 40 or older have a mammogram once a year. Women at increased risk (for example, previous breast cancer, family history of breast cancer) should talk with their doctors about the benefits of starting mammography screening earlier or having more frequent exams.

Scheduling your yearly mammogram
To schedule your yearly mammogram, call 402-5000 and we will find the time and location most convenient for you.

Mammography locations
We have two mammography locations:
- Roper Hospital (digital)
- Bon Secours St. Francis Hospital (digital)

Breast MRI
Taking a Closer Look

Breast MRI uses Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) to examine breast tissue without exposing patients to ionizing radiation. By producing hundreds of images of the breast, cross-sectional from side-to-side, top-to-bottom and front-to-back, Breast MRI can successfully image dense breast tissue and in some cases detect small lesions that can be missed by mammography or ultrasonic imaging. However, Breast MRI is not a substitute for your yearly mammograms. Breast MRI may be appropriate for:

- Evaluation of patients with newly diagnosed breast cancer
- Screening of high risk patients
- Evaluation of silicone implants
- Evaluation of response to adjuvant chemotherapy
- Evaluation of post-operative breast cancer patients
- Problem solving in conjunction with mammography, breast ultrasound and clinical findings
- Evaluation for residual or recurrent disease

Partial Breast Irradiation

Partial Breast Irradiation (PBI) offers an alternative to external beam radiation for patients with early stage breast cancer. With PBI, a radiation source is placed inside the lumpectomy cavity, delivering radiation directly to the area where cancer is most likely to recur.

This enables the patient to receive radiation in an equivalent dosage to external beam, but in a much shorter time period.

Ten PBI treatments are given over five days, compared with approximately a 30-day treatment period for conventional radiation therapy. PBI is typically well tolerated, with only mild side effects for a short period of time, and the therapy is given on an outpatient basis.

Breast MRI
Partial Breast Irradiation
Breast Nurse Navigator
Your Guide Through Breast Cancer

Because a cancer diagnosis can be overwhelming, our staff is committed to making the experience as seamless and worry-free as possible. Our Breast Nurse Navigator helps guide breast cancer patients and their families through the complex maze of new information, treatment options and therapy regimens. She serves as a helpful resource and familiar face to comfort and assist throughout treatment and recovery, allowing the patient to focus her energy and efforts on her health.

Our Breast Nurse Navigator is available to any patient with breast cancer, from new diagnosis to recurrence to end-of-life issues. She has special clinical training to offer support for a wide-range of services including:

- Serves as an informed and caring clinical resource throughout treatment
- Serves as a link between care providers and treatment settings
- Identifies and meets ongoing learning needs of patients and families
- Connects patients and families with educational breast health resources
- Coordinates availability of free screening and/or diagnostic breast imaging procedures to eligible women who are uninsured or underinsured

Breast Microsurgery

Roper St. Francis Healthcare is one of only a few centers in the country offering a new microsurgical breast reconstruction option to breast cancer patients. This superior muscle sparing method of breast reconstruction uses skin and soft tissue removed at mastectomy and soft, warm, living tissue borrowed from the skin and fatty tissue of the abdomen or buttocks. A slim incision is made along the bikini line much like that used for a tummy tuck. The necessary skin, soft tissue and tiny feeding blood vessels are removed and used in the reconstruction of the breast. With this method, the contour of the abdomen and the buttock shape is often improved and the scar is almost completely hidden.

Using these advanced techniques, any breast size can be reconstructed and restored to a natural contour. Bilateral reconstruction is especially amenable to our muscle sparing techniques. Reconstruction can take place concurrently with mastectomy, or at a later time.

Lymphedema Management Program

Surgical treatment of breast cancer may include the removal of one or more lymph nodes from under the arm. This can result in lymphedema or chronic swelling of the arm. The Roper St. Francis Cancer Center takes a multi-disciplinary approach to treating lymphedema, including massage and microsurgical techniques.

- Manage: The purpose of massage is to create spaces in the tissues and then manage the fluid into these spaces and away from the limb. The massage starts where the lymphatic attachments to the trunk and the lymphatics are relatively normal. The lymphedema therapist massages fluid away from the affected area toward the trunk. Therapy may need to continue for several weeks until the decrease in swelling is satisfactory.

Lymph Node Transplant:

Some patients may be candidates for vascular lymph node transfers, a surgical treatment in which lymph nodes from an unaffected area of the body are transplanted to the area of the affected limb. Many patients who do undergo surgery experience a reduction to the size of the affected limb, have fewer symptoms, and may see results that render lymphatic massage, banding, and compressive garments no longer necessary.

Survival Rates

The Roper St. Francis Cancer Center is proud to report that we have an 86% 5-year survival rate. This is higher than South Carolina average of 82% and the national average of 83%.

Breast Care Information

For more information please visit our website at www.rsfh.com/cancer or call 402-CARE for more information.