

*Ellen Shaw De Paredes Institute for Women's Imaging*

Our Institute wants to provide the following information to all our patients and supporters and the community, regarding the coronavirus and the side effects of the vaccines on mammography studies.

First the vaccine could cause enlargement of the lymph nodes in the axilla. (armpit) This can happen in about 11% of patients after the first dose, and 16%-19% after the second dose according with the CDC although some studies mention higher numbers. The enlarge lymph nodes appear 2-4 days after the first injection and disappear within 1-2 days.

The importance of this enlarge lymph nodes in the axilla is because much of the lymph node drainage from the breast is in the axilla. Therefore, patients should be familiar with examination of their armpit, using the left hand for the right axilla with your fingers up, pressing upward and inwards, against the chest wall, and the opposite fingers for the opposite side. (This could be done while showering).

The SBI recommends waiting 4-6 weeks before having a mammogram, to prevent misinterpretation of the mammogram studies, after having the vaccine, therefore try to schedule your mammogram before having the vaccine,

Also, it is important to know that a person who has had COVID-19 could be reinfected. It is also possible that a person may get COVID-19 after having the first dose of the vaccine, because it is not totally protected.

For this reason, it is important to follow the guidelines of wearing a mask, covering face, nose, and mouth, avoid crowds and wash your hands often.

Finally, if you are a high-risk patient for breast cancer or notice any unusual changes in your breast: to seek immediate care.

We hope that this information will be useful and practical, to help you with your health.

With Best Regards,

*V.M Paredes M.D.*

*CDC -Center for Disease Control*

*SBI -Society of Breast Imaging*