Markey Cancer Center’s Comprehensive Breast Care Center is committed to providing each patient with the most personalized treatment options possible and to making greater advances in breast cancer prevention, early diagnosis and treatment. Our high standards of care and recent improvements have resulted in a greater ability to serve patients efficiently plus two prestigious accreditations. The introduction of tomosynthesis, the new breast imaging technology, will further the center’s diagnostic capabilities and improve patient outcomes. As always, we remain focused on helping our patients through all parts of the treatment process using a team approach to healing.
“These accreditations are due to the efforts of the entire team here at the breast center, from administrative staff to the nurses to the clinicians. It is further proof of how committed we are to providing the absolute best care to breast cancer patients across the region.”

– Heather Wright, MD, medical director of the Comprehensive Breast Care Center (pictured above)
Tomosynthesis: Mammography, only better

Markey Cancer Center’s Comprehensive Breast Care Center is the first health care provider in Kentucky, and one of the first in the U.S., to offer tomosynthesis. This leading-edge technology is the next level in breast imaging and will revolutionize how breast cancer is detected.

Imaging is a critical piece of patient care that allows health care providers to see inside the body to learn more about a patient’s health. Tomosynthesis takes multiple low-dose images of the breast and synthesizes them into a three-dimensional data set. A radiologist can then examine that data set incrementally and look behind and beside structures to find cancers that could not be seen on a standard mammogram.

For patients, a tomosynthesis exam will feel similar to a standard mammogram. During a standard mammogram the X-ray tube remains still, but with a tomosynthesis machine the X-ray tube moves in an arch over the patient, acquiring multiple images. The machine takes both the standard mammogram and the tomosynthesis in one compression, but the patient is unable to perceive the difference.

We cannot prevent breast cancer yet, so our best tool is early detection. For years, the cornerstone of early detection has been mammography. Tomosynthesis is mammography, only better. For patients, this will result in earlier detection and better outcomes.

“The new organization of our center has really improved our ability to see patients and serve them more efficiently. We’ve eliminated wait times for patients who need diagnostic mammograms and can schedule most patients within the same week.”

– Crystal Kendrick, clinic manager for the Comprehensive Breast Care Center (pictured at left)
We’ve made great strides with two recent prestigious accreditations

Over the past year and a half, Markey Cancer Center’s Comprehensive Breast Care Center has witnessed a revolutionary transformation. Under the leadership of Heather Wright, MD, significant changes have dramatically improved workflow and the center’s ability to see more patients sooner. Today, the center is proud to offer a full range of services, including routine screenings, second opinions and advanced treatment options for breast cancer.

The Comprehensive Breast Care Center has made recent improvements to its diagnostic technology. The first of three Hologic Selenia® Dimensions™ 2-D digital mammography units is in place, providing exceptional image quality. Three new state-of-the-art ultrasound machines using elastography software were added to increase the diagnostic accuracy of ultrasound in differentiating malignant from benign breast lesions. Tomosynthesis will further improve the center’s diagnostic capabilities.

The center has also welcomed to its team Margaret Szabunio, MD, a respected radiologist who comes to UK from the Moffitt Cancer Center in Tampa, Fla. Dr. Szabunio specializes in early detection of breast cancer using new technologies, including elastography and tomosynthesis. She is the division chief of women’s radiology at UK HealthCare and serves as the associate medical director of the Comprehensive Breast Care Center.

Many of the recent improvements have helped the center earn a three-year/full accreditation designation by the National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers. This accreditation is only given to centers that undergo a rigorous evaluation process and review of their performance and demonstrate the highest level of quality breast care.

In addition, the center was named a Breast Imaging Center of Excellence by the American College of Radiology. This designation is awarded to breast imaging centers that achieve excellence by passing rigorous breast-imaging accreditation programs and modules as well as the mandatory Mammography Accreditation Program.
Caring and informative navigators guide patients on their journey through illness

For someone battling cancer, the road to recovery can seem infinitely long and uncertain. From the initial diagnosis to the treatments and often-burdensome costs, cancer is a disease that not only affects the patient’s body – it transforms the entire lives of the patient and his or her family.

The Markey Cancer Center’s Comprehensive Breast Care Center is proud to offer patients the unique and invaluable services provided by the patient navigator program. Providing one-on-one assistance to patients, families and caregivers, our navigators help guide patients through the complexities of the health care system.

“We’ve set the highest of standards and are proud to be as hands-on and thorough as we are with our patients,” said Virginia Hodskins, patient navigator.

Simply stated, when a patient knows what to expect along the way, cancer treatment is significantly less scary. This truth guides our patient navigators, who work to demystify the intricate and highly involved treatment process.

“The patients and their families truly make the experience for me,” Hodskins said. “I just cannot imagine doing anything else.”

“We’ve set the highest of standards and are proud to be as hands-on and thorough as we are with our patients.”

– Virginia Hodskins, patient navigator
We’re a team

At the Markey Comprehensive Breast Care Center, patients are evaluated by a team consisting of specialists from surgical oncology, medical oncology, radiation medicine, diagnostic mammography, pathology, and plastic and reconstructive surgery. Our specialists work together in a single location to provide timely and accurate health care, from evaluation and diagnosis to treatment planning.

Genetic counseling and testing services are also available. In addition, a variety of support groups meet on a regular basis. New patient navigators are available to assist breast cancer patients with nonclinical issues, such as lack of transportation to appointments or obtaining prosthetics or wigs.

The Comprehensive Breast Care Center is located on the second floor of the Whitney-Hendrickson Building at 800 Rose Street, Lexington.

To request an appointment, call 859-257-4488 or 1-866-340-4488 toll free.

For more information on the Comprehensive Breast Care Center at Markey Cancer Center, please visit ukhealthcare.uky.edu/Markey/breast.asp.

(Above, left to right): Ed Romond, MD, Margaret Szabunio, MD, Heather Wright, MD, Paul Spicer, MD, Mincha Parker, APRN, Mara Chambers, MD, Richard Gibbs, MD, Pushpa Patel, MD.

A Markey Cancer Center genetic counselor, Elizabeth Reilly, MS, works with men and women who have been diagnosed with cancer or have a family history of cancer. Reilly gives patients a better understanding of what having a genetic predisposition to cancer means. She also provides genetic risk assessment and comprehensive genetic counseling, and explains genetic testing, including the benefits and limitations of testing. Finally, if appropriate, she orders genetic testing.