

## Henda's Law (Texas House Bill 2102)

Starting in January 2012, when a woman receives her mammogram report from her mammography facility, it may include *new information* about the presence of 'dense breasts.'

### What are 'dense' breasts?

Dense breast tissue – a common, natural occurrence in many women – is comprised of less fat and more connective tissue. According to the American College of Radiology Imaging Network (ACRIN), 40% of all women undergoing screening mammography have dense breasts. Over 50% of women under the age of 50 and one-third of women older than 50, have mammograms showing dense breasts.

### Why is it important for me to know if I have dense breasts?

On a mammogram, high density tissue shows up white the same as cancerous tissue might. Dense breast tissue can hide abnormalities.

No single procedure can detect all breast cancers, especially in dense breasts. **Supplemental** (additional) **screenings** may be helpful in detecting cancer in dense breasts.

It is important to understand that, if you have dense breasts, you do *not* necessarily have breast cancer. It only suggests supplemental screenings might provide a more thorough view.

### How will I know if I have dense breasts?

Starting in January 2012 in Texas, if your mammogram indicates you have dense breasts, Henda's Law requires the mammography facility to include the following statement with your mammogram report.

"If your mammogram demonstrates that you have dense breast tissue, which could hide abnormalities, and you have other risk factors for breast cancer that have been identified, you might benefit from supplemental screening tests that may be suggested by your ordering physician. Dense breast tissue, in and of itself, is a relatively common condition. Therefore, this information is not provided to cause undue concern, but rather to raise your awareness and to promote discussion with your physician regarding the presence of other risk factors, in addition to dense breast tissue. A report of your mammography results will be sent to you and your physician. You should contact your physician if you have any questions or concerns regarding this report."

### How do I know if I have 'other risk factors' for breast cancer'?

Henda's Law does not require mammography facilities to inform patients of their other risk factors. To find out whether you have other risk factors for breast cancer, you should contact your referring physician. Your personal physician has the most complete information to determine if other risk factors might apply to you.

### **What should I do if my screening mammogram report says I have dense breasts?**

You should follow up with your physician to discuss whether you might benefit from supplemental screenings. Supplemental screenings might include any of the following procedures: additional-view digital mammography, whole-breast ultrasound, automated breast ultrasound, digital tomosynthesis, molecular breast imaging and magnetic resonance imaging.

**The new law does not require your physician to follow up with you; consequently, it is up to you to approach your physician with questions regarding any needed follow-up screenings.**

### **If my doctor and I agree that I need follow-up screenings, what are my options?**

Henda's Law does NOT require insurers to pay for supplemental screenings. Any additional screening procedures you receive may require you to pay the total cost. (Check with your insurance company in advance to learn whether they pay for these supplemental procedures.)

The law also does NOT require mammography facilities to provide supplemental screening tests.

The Rose offers digital mammography and whole breast ultrasound supplemental screenings.