Mayo Clinic Minute: Molecular breast imaging for supplemental breast screening

If you are one of the millions of women identified as having dense breasts, your healthcare team may recommend supplemental or additional screening to check your breasts for cancer.

Dr. Kristin Robinson, a breast radiologist at Mayo Clinic, says there are several options when it comes to these screening tests. She recommends working closely with your healthcare team to determine what is the best supplemental screening available and right for you.

One option is molecular breast imaging (MBI). A Mayo Clinic study shows that MBI is more effective than mammography alone for women with dense breasts.

Video	Audio
Kristin Robinson, M.D. Radiology Mayo Clinic	"Breast density is important for really two separate reasons. One, the dense tissue on a mammogram looks white, and cancer looks white, so you can imagine if we're trying to find a small breast cancer in a sea of white breast tissue, it can be very difficult."
	And second, those with dense breasts have a slightly higher risk of developing breast cancer, says Dr. Kristin Robinson.
	"For those reasons, we encourage women who have dense breast tissue to consider supplemental screening."
	One of the screenings you may hear about is called MBI, a test developed by Mayo Clinic. It's done in addition to a mammogram.
	"MBI is a molecular breast imaging test."
	It uses a radioactive tracer that can identify cancer cells.
	"And since breast cancer is growing quickly, it's recruiting blood flow, it has more energy than the surrounding breast tissue, it will uptake that radiotracer more so than the normal tissue."
	And by doing so, it lights up and becomes clearer to see for a radiologist compared to the normal surrounding tissue, says Dr. Robinson.
	To find out if MBI or other screening options are best for you, talk with your healthcare team.
	"If you have dense breast tissue, really consider supplemental screening because we know that detects a significant number more breast cancers than mammograms alone."
	For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I'm DeeDee Stiepan.