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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**STATE-OF-THE-ART DIGITAL MAMMOGRAPHY  
NOW AVAILABLE AT AMMC**

*New Diagnostic Tool in Fight Against Breast Cancer Offers Many Advantages*

**PARAGOULD, AR** – Arkansas Methodist Medical Center announces the addition of digital mammography as another state-of-the-art healthcare service now available to patients at the medical center.

“The acquisition of this new cutting-edge mammography system is part of a \$2.5 million expansion of equipment and services currently underway at the medical center, as part of our ongoing commitment to providing top-notch, quality, compassionate healthcare to all of the communities we serve,” AMMC President and CEO Ron Rooney said.

Digital mammography offers more precise images, increasing the chances of early detection; allows patients to complete the entire screening process in less time, with 40 percent less exposure to radiation according to Dr. Barbara Rodrigues, a radiologist at AMMC. The system also provides a more comfortable compression.

“The difference between standard mammography and digital mammography is much like the difference between a conventional film camera and a digital camera. Digital images can be enhanced on a computer for more accurate diagnoses for patients,” Dr. Rodrigues said. “In addition, while standard and digital mammography both use x-rays, digital mammography offers less exposure to radiation.” She noted, “Less time is often needed as the results of a digital

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mammogram can be seen more quickly on a computer screen, limiting discomfort and anxiety to patients.”

Early detection is often the best defense against breast cancer, Carrie Rowland, a mammographer at AMMC emphasized, and mammography is considered the best way to detect breast cancer in its earliest, most treatable stages.

Medicare, Medicaid and most health insurance plans will cover all or part of the cost of a mammography screening.

According to Susan G. Komen for the Cure® Arkansas, nearly 400,000 women in Arkansas have never had a mammogram, and the American Cancer Society (ACS) estimates that in 2009, nearly 2,000 women will be newly diagnosed with breast cancer.

The ACS cites breast cancer as the most commonly diagnosed cancer after skin cancer, and the second leading cause of cancer-related death among women in the United States.

In addition to self-exams, the national Centers for Disease Control (CDC) estimates that early detection through screening mammograms can reduce mortality from breast cancer by approximately 20-35 percent in women aged 50-69, and approximately 20 percent in women aged 40-49.

The ACS recommends that women over the age of 40 be screened for breast cancer with a mammogram every year.

To schedule a digital mammogram at AMMC, call (870) 239-7120.

A recognized leader, Arkansas Methodist Medical Center in Paragould provides progressive, compassionate healthcare to residents throughout Northeast Arkansas and Southeast Missouri. Additional information about AMMC is available at: [www.arkansasmethodist.org](http://www.arkansasmethodist.org).