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HerSpace: Breast Imaging Associates Offers New Services: Breast MRI and MRI Intervention, Genetic Counseling and Testing and Clinical Breast Exams

HerSpace: Breast Imaging Associates ([www.herspacebreast.com](http://www.herspacebreast.com)), the region's only independent comprehensive breast imaging and biopsy center, has expanded its state-of-the-art services with high resolution breast MRI and MRI-guided breast biopsies, genetic counseling and testing for high risk patients and clinical breast exams offered with the mammography appointment.

"It has always been my goal to offer women the most advanced breast imaging and biopsy technology. We established the first local breast MRI program with CAD (computer aided detection), and we are currently the only area facility to offer MRI-guided breast biopsies," notes HerSpace Founder and Medical Director Beth M. Deutch, MD. "Clinical research has found breast MRI to be a very sensitive study for breast cancer. The technology has been applied to patients recently diagnosed with breast cancer, prior to definitive surgery, to better assess the extent of the disease in the breast. Currently, it is being evaluated as a secondary breast cancer screening study in addition to the annual mammogram for women at high risk for breast cancer. Many of my high-risk patients will have an annual breast MRI at the six-month interval between mammogram appointments to maximize their chances of early detection and cure."

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## **Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) Intervention and Genetic Counseling**

A certain percentage of suspicious findings on the MRI will not be visible on other standard imaging studies of the breast. They will, therefore, require an MRI-guided biopsy to determine if they are cancerous or benign lesions.

“Breast MRI vacuum biopsy, the latest and least invasive method of obtaining tissue from a suspicious finding on breast MRI, performed in the MRI suite, is a technically challenging and relatively new procedure that requires expertise in the field of breast imaging and additional training,” notes Dr. Deutch. “We are pleased to be able to offer this procedure to our patients.”

Since the opening of HerSpace in August 2002, the facility and Dr. Deutch have seen many women who are at high risk for breast cancer, due to family history, personal history, or previous biopsy showing a high risk lesion in their breast. Many of these patients carry a genetic mutation in one of two genes that has been linked to a very high lifetime risk of breast and ovarian cancer. Although it is unusual for a breast imaging facility to offer genetic counseling and testing, it made sense for HerSpace.

“We are often one of the first contact points and sources of education on breast health and disease for women,” says Dr. Deutch. “Since a core mission at HerSpace is to educate women about breast health, prevention, early detection and treatment for breast cancer, offering genetic counseling and testing (a simple blood test) is a natural extension of our screening and diagnostic services.”

Healthcare advocates encourage high-risk women and those with a family history of reproductive cancers to speak to a genetic educator to further understand the benefits of testing. HerSpace offers a series of consultations with Laurie Jeffers, MSN, a board certified nurse practitioner and a genetic educator who specializes in women’s health issues. The sessions including a family history assessment, pre-test counseling, a blood test, additional face-to-face discussion about the results and post-test counseling.

“As someone who has spent my career educating patients about health, I believe that it really is true that ‘knowledge is power,’” notes Jeffers. “With the knowledge gleaned through genetic education and testing, high-risk women can make more informed decisions about their long-term health and well-being.”

### **Clinical Breast Exam**

In addition to offering MRI Intervention and genetic education services, a recent survey of HerSpace’s patients indicated an interest in receiving a clinical breast exam (CBE) at the time of their mammography visit. Dr. Deutch added CBE to help women become more self-assured and educated about breast exams.

“Not all women schedule an annual physical or gynecologic exam and unfortunately, in today’s healthcare environment, some physicians don’t have the time to give as thorough an exam as they would like,” says Laurie. “An annual CBE performed by a healthcare professional, can offer a woman peace of mind. The two most common reasons a woman doesn’t perform monthly self-breast exams is not being confident about what they should be feeling or being afraid of what they are feeling. At HerSpace we devote a significant amount of time to conduct a thorough breast exam, which includes reviewing anatomy of breast tissue, explaining how to detect lumps or abnormalities, showing the patient how to perform her own exam, practicing on a breast model, and ultimately, helping her feel confident, capable and knowledgeable about taking care of herself. By having a CBE prior to a mammography, we are combining two life-saving tools, thus, enhancing the possibility of early breast cancer detection.

Breast cancer organizations and healthcare advocates recommend women in their 20s and 30s have a clinical breast exam performed by a healthcare professional as part of their regular health exam, preferably every three years. Women 40 and older should have an exam annually according to experts in women’s healthcare.

## About HerSpace

HerSpace is the only specialized breast-imaging facility in Monmouth and Ocean counties offering a compendium of services including:

- Full-field digital and film screen mammography
- Breast ultrasound
- Breast Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)
- Stereotactic, ultrasound-guided and MRI-guided core biopsy (mammotomy)
- Needle localization for surgical biopsy
- Cyst aspiration
- Galactography
- Bone densitometry
- Physical Breast Examinations
- Genetic Education and Testing
- Consults/second opinion

HerSpace is an Academy of Clinical Radiology (ACR) accredited facility, receiving the organization's highest rating.

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For additional information about the latest options and techniques in breast healthcare, please contact the staff at HerSpace: Breast Imaging Associates, ([www.herspacebreast.com](http://www.herspacebreast.com)). HerSpace is located in Monmouth Corporate Park I, Building A, Suite 130, 187 State Highway 36 in W. Long Branch, East of the Monmouth Mall off Garden State Parkway Exit 105. Phone #: 732-571-9100.