

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
				
High:25° Low:	High:32° Low:	High:40° Low:	High:65° Low:	High:70° Low:
FEELS LIKE -0°	FEELS LIKE 22°	FEELS LIKE 40°	FEELS LIKE 65°	FEELS LIKE 70°

Five-Day Forecast

Pauline Mason was living life – enjoying her job of 25 years as a storeroom clerk, spending time with her grown children and grandchildren, and looking forward to retirement in a few years. Then, she heard the “C” (cancer) word.

“When a person hears the word ‘cancer,’ everything just shuts down. That’s the only word you can really focus on,” says Pauline.

Pauline had discovered a lump in her right breast while she was bathing. A breast biopsy confirmed her suspicions. With a cancer diagnosis in hand, Pauline was quick to consult with doctors, asking lots of questions and exploring her treatment options. Those options included surgery, radiation and chemotherapy.

Dr. Janet Merfeld, radiation oncologist at Mercy’s Hall-Perrine Cancer Center, met with Pauline and told her she was a good candidate

for MammoSite® targeted radiation therapy, a type of high-dose rate brachytherapy. MammoSite works from inside the breast, directly targeting radiation to the precise area where cancer is most likely to recur. And, it offers a level of convenience not found with a typical course of radiation therapy.

“MammoSite spares healthy tissue and organs from the effects of whole breast radiation and allows more targeted treatment to be completed in just five days instead of six weeks,” says Merfeld. “Like

Pauline, many women we treat travel from a distance, and the thought of coming to Cedar Rapids daily for six weeks is less attractive than if we can offer MammoSite and they can be finished in less than a week.”

With MammoSite, a radiation seed is delivered through a small balloon catheter into the area of the breast where the cancerous tumor has already been surgically removed. A typical MammoSite treatment takes only about 10 minutes and, once the treatment is completed, the radioactive seed is retracted and removed. No radiation remains in

the breast between treatments. Patients receive

“Just five days instead of six weeks”

*Janet Merfeld
Radiation Oncologist
at Mercy Medical Center*



MammoSite treatments twice a day, about six hours apart, for five days.

Pauline lives about 30 minutes away from the cancer center. She made twice daily trips from her home in Shellsburg to receive the Mammosite treatments.

“The length of the treatment time was a big factor for me, the sheer convenience,” says Pauline. “And it was literally painless. It’s just an amazing procedure. It was definitely the right option for me.”

“We have found MammoSite to be a nice, effective way to offer breast brachytherapy here in Cedar Rapids, with very few side effects to the patient,” says Merfeld. “Many women with early stage breast cancer are candidates for this treatment. We have great outcomes.”

Pauline says it was definitely the right choice

for her. Five years later, she remains cancer-free and is enjoying retirement to the fullest. Much of her time and energy now is spent advocating for self-breast exams and promoting early detection.

“I’m just very grateful and I want to help other people,” she says.

To learn more about MammoSite at Mercy’s Hall-Perrine Cancer Center, visit www.hallperrinecancercenter.org/fivedays.



Dr. Janet Merfeld (right), radiation oncologist at Mercy’s Hall-Perrine Cancer Center, recommended MammoSite targeted radiation therapy to treat Pauline Mason’s breast cancer.