

Screening mammograms are important because they can find breast cancer early.

When breast cancer is found early, treatment may work better.

Make sure to come back for your next mammogram!

- Your return mammograms are even more important than the first one.
- Current and previous mammograms are compared so small breast changes can be found.

Along with screening mammograms:

- Get a breast exam from your healthcare provider as part of your regular health check-up.
- Know what looks and feels normal for you. Tell your healthcare provider if you notice any unusual changes.

About the Alberta Breast Cancer Screening Program

The Alberta Breast Cancer Screening Program (ABCSP) is coordinated by Alberta Health Services in partnership with the Alberta Society of Radiologists. The ABCSP mails your screening mammogram results to you.

To get letters from the ABCSP, your name and address must be up to date with Alberta Health; call 310-0000 (toll free) then dial 780-427-1432.

Screening is one of the best things you can do for yourself to find breast cancer early. Breast, cervical, and colorectal cancer screening saves lives.

For more information, please contact

Cancer Screening Programs

Phone: 1-866-727-3926

Fax: 1-888-944-3388

Web: screeningforlife.ca/aboriginal

Local contact information

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BREAST009



Alberta Breast Cancer
Screening Program



Breast Screening

All About Screening Mammograms

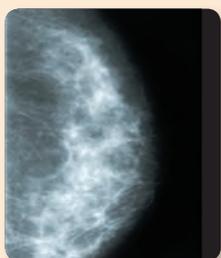


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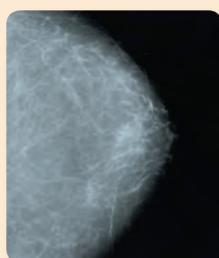
What is a screening mammogram?

- A mammogram is an x-ray of the breast.
- A screening mammogram checks for abnormalities in breast tissue.
- Screening mammograms can find cancer long before it can be felt.

Examples of mammogram films



Dense breast tissue



Fatty breast tissue

Who should get screening mammograms?

Women aged 40 to 49 should talk to their healthcare provider about their breast cancer risk and their need for screening mammograms.

Women aged 50 to 74 should have regular screening mammograms.

Women aged 75 and over should talk with their healthcare provider about continuing screening mammograms.

- Mammograms work best for women aged 50 and over because their breast tissue is fatty.
- Abnormalities are easier to detect when breast tissue is fatty rather than dense.



How is a screening mammogram taken?

- Your breast rests on a plastic plate.
- This plate can be adjusted to suit your height.
- A second plate presses down on the breast. This spreads out breast tissue so small abnormalities can be seen.
- Four x-rays are taken: one from the top and one from the side of each breast.
- The whole process takes about ten minutes.

Are mammograms painful?

Some women find mammograms uncomfortable. Others find them painful but tolerable.

If I have small breasts, do I still need a mammogram?

Yes! Breast size has nothing to do with breast cancer risk.

When do I get the results?

You and your healthcare provider will receive results in the mail within two weeks.

When do I return?

Women aged 40 to 49: return every year.

Women aged 50 to 74: return every 2 years (some women return every year if recommended by their healthcare provider).

Women aged 75 and over: you may continue to benefit from regular screening mammograms. Talk with your healthcare provider.

What if my results are abnormal?

About 5% of women screened have an abnormal result. Only a small number of these will be cancer. However, you should call your healthcare provider right away so they can arrange for the needed follow-up tests.

To learn more about abnormal screening mammogram results, see our brochure **Making Sense of Abnormal Mammogram Results**, available at www.screeningforlife.ca/aboriginal or by calling 1-866-727-3926.