

BREAST CANCER SCREENING

A mammogram is an x-ray image of the breasts used to detect breast cancer and other changes in breast tissue.



Breast Cancer

Breast cancer starts in the breast tissue. Breast cancer is the most common type of cancer among women in Canada - 1 in 8 women are expected to develop breast cancer in their lifetime.

Breast cancer also has one of the highest survival rates of all cancers.

Risk Factors

There is no single cause of breast cancer. Risk factors include:

- age (most common in people aged 50 or older)
- family history of breast cancer
- BRCA gene mutations
- alcohol consumption
- obesity
- physical inactivity
- reproductive history

Prevention

Screening mammography is used to look for breast cancer and other changes in the breasts of women with no symptoms. Getting tested regularly will help ensure that breast cancer is caught early.



Get Tested

Getting regular mammograms is an important step in protecting your health. These tests can:

- find cancer early, when it may be easier to treat
- lower the risk of dying from breast cancer

When to Get Tested

If you are 30–69 years old and are confirmed high-risk

The Ontario Breast Screening Program (OBSP) recommends getting a mammogram with MRI **every year**. Talk to your doctor if you think you may be high risk for breast cancer.

If you are 40–49 years old

You can self-refer for mammograms starting at 40 by contacting your nearest Ontario Breast Screening Program (OBSP).

If you are 50–74 years old

The Ontario Breast Screening Program recommends getting a mammogram **every two years**.

Talk to your doctor about getting a breast cancer screening requisition.

You can also contact your nearest Ontario Breast Screening Program location or call 1-800-668-9304 to book an appointment.

Mammogram Procedure



Some women find mammograms uncomfortable, but knowing what to expect during your appointment can help make the experience easier. A mammogram appointment only takes about 15 minutes.

The following will happen during your mammogram appointment:

1 A technologist will place your breast on a special x-ray machine.

2 A plastic plate will slowly flatten the breast and hold it in place for a few seconds.

3 An X-ray photo of the breast is taken by the machine.

4 This process is repeated. The technologist will take a total of four images (two per breast).

Results

Following your mammogram appointment, a radiologist will look at the photos taken during your procedure for any abnormal tissue in the breasts.

Both you and your healthcare provider will receive the results of your test.

If your test is normal, you will receive a reminder from the Ontario Breast Screening Program to be screened again, every 2 years.

If your test result is abnormal, your healthcare provider will arrange for you to have more tests.

Breast Awareness

Regular screening is the best way to catch breast cancer early. Talk to your healthcare provider as soon as possible if you notice any of the following warning signs of breast cancer:

Changes in the shape of the nipple or discharge from the nipple



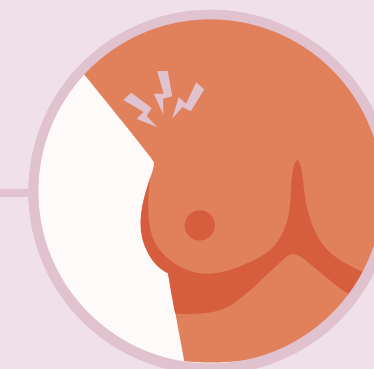
Pain or a new lump in the breast that doesn't go away after your period



Unexplained redness, swelling, skin irritation, itchiness or rash on the breast



Swelling or a lump around the collarbone or under the arm



While most changes to the breasts are non-cancerous, see your healthcare provider to get a full evaluation if you experience any of the above signs or symptoms.

Early detection is key! Breast cancer is easier to treat when caught early.