

Breast Cancer Screening

What is it?

Breast cancer screening is a test that checks for early signs of breast cancer. Finding breast cancer early means treatment can start early. A breast cancer screen involves scanning the breasts using an X-ray test called a mammogram. This can find cancers that are too small to feel during a self exam of the breast. Sometimes the option of additional scans such as an MRI, CT or ultrasound may be discussed.

You go to a breast screening clinic or private radiology provider to have the screen. If your results are normal, you may not need your next screen for two years. If your results show that you may need more tests, your GP will discuss the options and next steps with you.

Women who are most likely to benefit from breast cancer screening are those aged 50 to 74 years. Discuss screening and your breast cancer risk with your GP.

What will my GP do now?

You and your GP may discuss how screening tests work. Your GP may discuss the reasons why you might have the tests and what the options are. You will also get tools and supports to help you decide. If you have a family member who has had cancer, your GP may refer you to a specialist. You do not have to have a breast cancer screening test if you choose not to.

What questions could I ask my doctor?

- ☐ *How often should I have a screen?*
- ☐ *What type of screening tests should I consider?*
- ☐ *What if I have a family history of cancer?*



What will my GP do in the future?

Your GP will discuss your screening results with you and sometime further tests may be offered. If you have a risk of breast cancer in your family you may also be referred to a family cancer clinic or breast specialist.

What can I do?

Talk to your GP about breast screening and let them know about any cancer in your family history so they can provide you with the advice you need. If you are worried or have questions, speak to your GP or breast screening clinic nurse. Waiting for test results can be hard, but try not to feel anxious. If your screening result is abnormal, your GP will talk to you about further tests that may be needed.

What supports are available?

Your GP can suggest a local breast cancer service or clinic. Private specialists are also an option. Ask your GP about a referral.

Where can I learn more?

BreastScreen NSW: breastscreen.nsw.gov.au

- Breast screening for Aboriginal women: breastscreen.nsw.gov.au
- Breast implants and breast screening: breastscreen.nsw.gov.au

This information is to be viewed by someone who has received a diagnosis from their doctor. It is not designed to be used to diagnose a condition or as a substitute for ongoing medical care

Health Resource Directory
factsheets are endorsed by South
Western Sydney PHN's Community
Advisory Committee and local GPs