

Do I need a doctor's referral?

At most screening programs, you can book your own appointments. Canada's health community recommends that all women over 50 go for regular screening mammograms.

How can I be part of my provincial breast screening program?

- Your family doctor can encourage you to participate.
- By invitation from the screening program.
- By calling your local screening program to book your appointment. Telephone numbers are listed on the back.

When will I get my results? What happens then?

The screening program will advise you and your doctor of your results. If there is anything seen on your screening mammogram that might need follow-up, your doctor will be told right away. Your doctor or the screening program will then work with you if you require more tests. A diagnostic mammogram is the most common follow-up test used to focus on the area of concern seen during screening.

About 5 to 10 women out of 100 will need more tests after their screening mammogram. This is a normal part of the screening process.

After these follow-up tests, most women will have a normal result and should return to the provincial screening program in 1 to 2 years.

How often should I have mammograms?

To find breast cancer early, you need to have a screening mammogram on a regular basis. You should have a screening mammogram once every 2 years, or as recommended by the screening program or your family doctor.

How can I find breast cancer early?

1. Have regular screening mammograms at your provincial screening program.

Since about 10% of breast cancers are not seen on screening mammograms, you should also:

2. Have a regular clinical breast exam performed by your doctor. Some provincial screening programs have specially-trained staff to do a clinical breast exam for you.
3. Examine your own breasts each month. There are many videos and brochures on breast self examination (BSE). Check with your screening program or the local office of the Canadian Cancer Society.

The Canadian Breast Cancer Screening Initiative (part of the Canadian Breast Cancer Initiative) is a partnership between Health Canada, provincial/territorial screening programs, professional associations, non-governmental agencies and women.

Every province and territory in Canada has a screening program with locations to serve you – in hospitals, clinics or mobile units. Phone the number for your province, below, to learn how to book your screening mammogram.

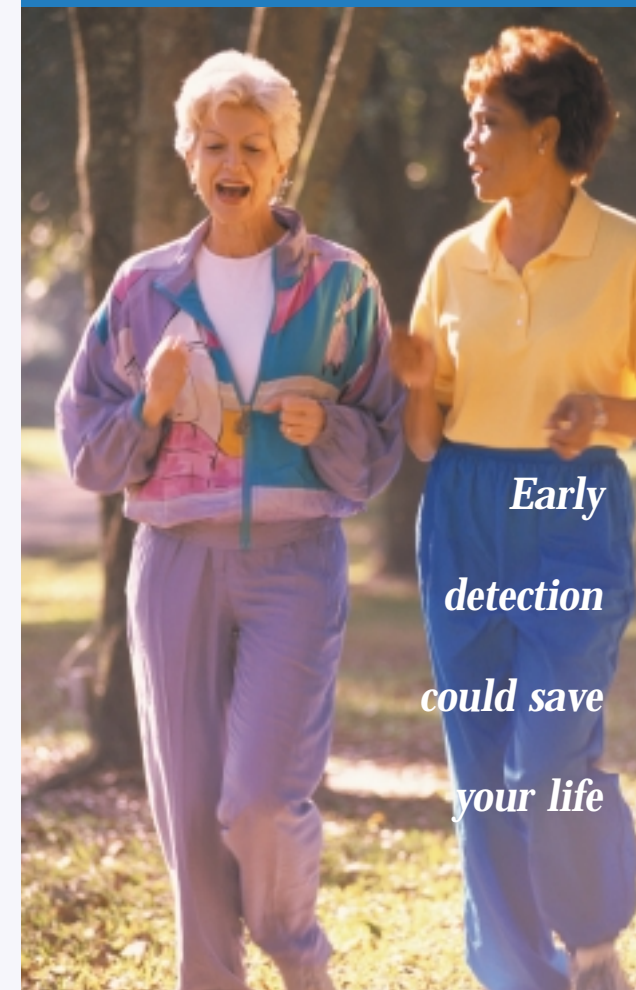
Alberta	1-800-667-0604
British Columbia	1-800-663-9203
Manitoba	1-800-903-9290
Newfoundland	1-800-414-3443
New Brunswick	call your local region hospital corporation
Northwest Territories	call your doctor or health clinic
Nova Scotia	1-800-565-0548
Nunavut	1-867-975-9700
Ontario	1-800-668-9304
Prince Edward Island	1-902-894-2915
Québec	call your doctor or Info-Santé
Saskatchewan	1-800-667-0017
Yukon	1-867-393-8740

For more information about cancer call:

Canadian Cancer Society

CANCER INFORMATION SERVICE

1-888-939-3333



Every woman is at risk for breast cancer and your risk increases with age. Eighty percent of all breast cancer occurs in women who are 50 and older. Fortunately, research has proven that regular screening mammograms are very effective for this age group.

What does your provincial breast screening program do for you?

Your screening program...

- **Educates** women about the importance of regular breast screening and breast self-examination.
- **Invites** women aged 50 and over to make an appointment for a screening mammogram and **reminds them when it is time for their next mammogram.**
- **Comes to you!** Many programs send mobile screening services into smaller communities.
- Makes sure women who need further tests receive **appropriate follow-up.**
- **Sends your results** to you and your doctor. Your doctor is an important part of the screening process.
- **Ensures high quality** – screening programs are evaluated thoroughly, on a regular basis. This increases the chances of finding cancer when it is very small.
- Keeps track of how many cancers are found, the size of cancers found, and how many women are sent for follow-up testing. This ensures **consistent, high-quality care** across Canada.

What should I know about breast cancer?

- The two major risk factors for breast cancer are being a woman and getting older.
- Breast cancer is the most frequently diagnosed form of cancer among women in Canada.
- At least 80% of women diagnosed have **no** family history of breast cancer.

Why screen for breast cancer?

- Regular screening mammograms have been shown to reduce deaths due to breast cancer by up to one-third among women aged 50 to 69.
- Screening mammograms find cancer when it is very small, before it can be felt. When cancer is found early, treatment is more successful and the survival rate is higher.

What is a screening mammogram?

- An x-ray of the breast, taken on a regular basis, in women who have no breast problems.
- The best screening test for finding breast cancer when it is small – 2 to 3 years before it can be felt by a woman or her doctor.

Are mammograms safe? Do they hurt?

- Modern mammography equipment uses very low doses of radiation. The benefits of screening for breast cancer far outweigh any risk of harm from the x-ray.
- To get a clear picture, the breast is compressed between two special plates. This may feel uncomfortable for a few seconds.

Can I have a screening mammogram?

All provincially-organized screening programs in Canada encourage women aged 50 to 69 to have screening mammograms. Research shows that this age group receives the greatest benefit from regular screening mammograms. Guidelines for women under 50 or over the age of 70 vary by province and territory. Check with your doctor or screening program.

A screening program may not be right for you if you have:

- recently been diagnosed with breast cancer
- breast implants
- breast problems such as a lump or nipple discharge

Check with your doctor or screening program about your options.

Is the screening program of high quality?

Screening mammography is a specialty within the field of radiology (x-ray). When you go to a provincial breast screening program, you are cared for by staff who are specialists in finding cancer when it is very small.

All provincial and territorial screening programs have agreed to seek and attain accreditation for their equipment by the Canadian Association of Radiologists (CAR).

Accreditation is one more way to ensure that you are having the best possible screening mammogram.