

Mammogram Screening for Breast Cancer

What is a mammogram?

A mammogram is an x-ray of the breast. It is the most common screening test for breast cancer. When you get a mammogram, you stand or sit at an x-ray machine. The machine pushes on your breast and takes a picture of the inside of your breast (*see photo*). Your doctor can look at the picture and check for cancer.

Why should I get a mammogram?

Breast cancer is the most common serious cancer in women. One out of every eight women gets it. Some women have an even higher risk, like if their mother or sister had breast cancer. Finding breast cancer early can allow for better treatment and keep you from dying from the cancer.

How often should I get a mammogram?

You should have one every one or two years. It depends on your age and whether you have a high risk of breast cancer. Your doctor can help you decide what age to start and stop, and how often you should get one.



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This handout is provided to you by your family doctor and the American Academy of Family Physicians. Other health-related information is available from the AAFP online at <https://familydoctor.org>.

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Are mammograms covered by medical insurance?

Yes, if you are at least 40 years old. You should not have to pay anything, not even a copayment.

Where can I get more information?

Your doctor

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/breast/basic_info/screening.htm

National Cancer Institute

<https://www.cancer.gov/types/breast/patient/breast-screening-pdq>

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