

**Did you know?**

9 out of 10 women who are diagnosed with breast cancer do not have a family history of the disease.

Mammograms (breast x-rays) can detect cancers long before they can be seen or felt by you or your doctor. **Almost all breast cancers found in the earliest stage can be treated successfully.**

BreastScreen NSW mammograms are free and performed by **female radiographers.**

**Interpreters are free and available** to help women make breast screening appointments.

**Group bookings can be arranged** and free interpreters can be organised to attend group appointments.

**You do not need a referral** from your doctor but we encourage you to bring your doctor's details to your appointment.

**Call, book and**



**13 20 50**

BreastScreen  
NSW



**Detecting  
breast cancer  
early is vital**

**About BreastScreen NSW**

BreastScreen NSW is a free breast screening program with over 150 locations in NSW. The program has been funded by the Australian government since 1991 with the aim of reducing deaths from breast cancer through early detection.

The program is especially **recommended for women aged 50 to 74 years.** However, all women over the age of 40 are eligible for screening through the program.

**Contact us**

To make an appointment at a location near you:  
13 20 50

**To find out more**

[breastscreen.nsw.gov.au](http://breastscreen.nsw.gov.au)

**For an interpreter's assistance**

13 14 50



[facebook.com/BreastScreenNSW](https://facebook.com/BreastScreenNSW)

For women aged  
50 to 74 years

BreastScreen  
NSW



**13 20 50**

20 minutes every 2 years  
could save your life

[breastscreen.nsw.gov.au](http://breastscreen.nsw.gov.au)

## What is a mammogram?

A mammogram is an x-ray of a woman's breasts. BreastScreen NSW mammograms are for women who have not noticed any symptoms or changes in their breasts.

## Should I have a mammogram?

Yes. If you are aged between 50 and 74, a breast x-ray every 2 years is the best way to find breast cancer early, when treatment is most likely to be successful.

Breast cancer can affect any woman regardless of the country she was born in or the language that she speaks. 1 in 8 women in NSW will be diagnosed with breast cancer in their lifetime, the majority of whom will be over 50 years old.

## What happens at a mammogram?

Your appointment will take approximately **20 minutes**. A friend or family member is welcome to come to the clinic with you. We will send forms for you to fill in and bring to your appointment. If you find this difficult, our staff can help you.

The **female radiographer will take you into the private x-ray room** where you can remove your top and bra. During your mammogram the radiographer will take at least two x-rays of each breast. Your breast will be compressed while the x-ray image is taken. This compression may be uncomfortable, but is only for a **very brief time (around 10 seconds)**. An x-ray can be taken regardless of the size of the breast.

If you feel any discomfort, inform your radiographer. You can stop the mammogram at any time.



## Can I have a mammogram if I am younger than 50 or older than 74?

All women aged 40 and over can contact BreastScreen NSW for a free mammogram.

BreastScreen NSW mammograms are not available for women under 40. Breast screening is not as effective in younger women due to denser breast tissue which makes it harder to see small cancers on a mammogram.

## How safe is a mammogram?

As with any x-ray, a very low amount of radiation is needed when taking a mammogram. Research shows **the benefits of having a mammogram to find breast cancer early far outweigh any possible risks from radiation.**

## What are the limitations of a mammogram?

A mammogram is the best way of detecting breast cancer early. **The earlier a breast cancer is found, the better a woman's chance of successful treatment and recovery.** However, like other screening tests, a mammogram is not 100% accurate.

- A small number of women who have a mammogram need more tests before a final result can be given. **9 out of 10 women who are asked to come back for more tests do not have breast cancer.**
- There is a very small chance that a screening mammogram will look normal even if a breast cancer is present. However, this is extremely rare. **Less than 1 woman in 1000 will be found to have a breast cancer in the year following their mammogram.**
- **Almost all breast cancers found through BreastScreen NSW would grow and become life-threatening if not treated.** However, a very small number of breast cancers that are found and treated may not have become life-threatening. At this time, it is not possible to tell exactly which breast cancers will become life-threatening and which will not.

## Be breast aware in between appointments

1. **Get to know your breasts** and what is normal for you. Look at your breasts in the mirror and feel your breasts regularly.
2. **If you notice any changes** in your breasts (i.e. lumps, nipple discharge or persistent new breast pain) see your doctor straight away.