



Preparing for a Mammogram

- ◆ Arrange to have your mammogram 1 to 2 weeks after your period ends.
 - ◆ Do not wear deodorant, perfume, powder, or lotion, because they can affect the quality of the X-ray.
 - ◆ Wear clothing that allows you to easily undress from the waist up.
-

Breast Health

Breast cancer is the leading cause of cancer deaths in women who are 40 to 55 years old. The good news is that breast cancer can often be highly treatable if it is detected early. There are 3 methods of early detection: mammography, clinical breast exam, and breast self-exam.

One of the most important risk factors for breast cancer is age. The risk goes up significantly after age 50.

Women younger than 50 are at relatively low risk for breast cancer. However, if your mother or a sister had breast cancer before menopause, talk with your physician about starting mammography and other screenings before age 40.

Mammography

A mammogram is a breast X-ray that can reveal breast tumors that are too small to be detected by breast self-exam or a clinical breast exam.

Studies have shown that mammograms save lives. In women over 50, mammograms reduce breast cancer death rates by up to 1/3. The outcomes of studies for women younger than 50 are less clear.

Your physician may tell you how often he or she would like you to get a mammogram. The following is a schedule that a physician may recommend for a woman who is not at high risk for breast cancer:

- ◆ Younger than 40: mammograms not usually done.
- ◆ Age 40 to 50: offer mammograms every 1 to 2 years depending on a schedule agreed upon by the woman and her physician.
- ◆ Over 50: mammograms every 1 to 2 years.

Yearly mammograms are recommended for any woman who has had cancer in one breast. If you have a female relative (mother, sister) who had breast cancer before menopause, talk to your physician about when to start and how often to have mammograms.