



Get screened:
**Find breast cancer
as early as possible.**

NYC[™]
Health

Find breast cancer as early as possible.

- One in eight women in the U.S. will develop breast cancer in her lifetime.
- Many women have a better chance of a cure when breast cancer is found early.
- Of people who get diagnosed early, **99% survive at least five years**, but far fewer of those with a late stage diagnosis do.

Mammograms are the key to early breast cancer detection.

- Mammograms are X-ray pictures of the breast that can spot a tumor before you can feel a lump in your breast.
- If you are age 40 or older, talk with your doctor about the right time to get a mammogram.
- If you have a family history of breast cancer, talk with your doctor before age 40 about the right time to get a mammogram.

What happens during a mammogram?

- A mammogram technician will help you position your breast on the X-ray machine.
- To get a good picture, the machine squeezes your breast tightly.
- You may feel an uncomfortable pinch, but the pain usually stops as soon as the picture is taken.
- Sometimes the technician takes more X-rays to get a clearer image. That does not necessarily mean there is a problem.

What does the mammogram show?

- The doctor (a radiologist) searches the X-ray pictures for any unusual breast tissue.
- Breast tissue changes over time. Your doctor will compare your mammogram test results with your past mammograms.
- If your mammogram shows areas that should be checked, your doctor may call you back for more imaging tests. These tests may include an X-ray, a sonogram or an MRI (magnetic resonance image).

Be sure to get your mammogram results.

- If you don't get your results before you leave the doctor's office, ask how you'll receive them.
- By law, you must receive the written results either at the time of the exam or by mail within 30 days. Make sure the doctor's office has your correct mailing address.
- If you don't receive your results, call the doctor's office. Do not assume everything is fine.



If you are told that your results require a follow-up visit or more testing, take action.

- Make sure you understand your results and what you need to do next. Ask questions.
- When more tests are recommended, get them right away.
- If cancer is diagnosed, don't wait. Get appropriate treatment NOW.

Reduce your risk.

Health and lifestyle risks:

- Maintain a healthy weight and be physically active. Get at least 30 minutes of moderate exercise, such as a brisk walk, at least five days a week.
- If you are on combination estrogen-progesterone hormone replacement therapy or currently use birth control pills, ask your doctor about any possible risks.
- Drinking alcohol can increase your breast cancer risk. A safe amount has not been determined yet. Visit [nyc.gov/health](https://www.nyc.gov/health) and search for “alcohol and health” for more information.



Other risks for breast cancer:

Make sure your doctor knows if you:

- Have ever had breast cancer.
- Have a close relative who had breast cancer, such as your mother, sister, daughter, grandmother or aunt.
- Have a specific gene mutation for breast cancer, such as BRCA1 or BRCA2 mutations. You can get a test to determine if you have these gene mutations.



Men can also get breast cancer. Though it is rare, talk to your doctor about your risk.

Don't Let Any of These Worries Stop You From Getting a Mammogram!

"I don't have health insurance."

- You may be eligible for free or low-cost screenings. Call 311 for more information.

"I'm an undocumented immigrant."

- You have the right to good medical care, regardless of race, ethnicity, income or immigration status.
- Call 311 to find out where to get a mammogram. No one will ask about your immigration status.

"I feel fine!"

- Most breast cancers do not cause symptoms at first. You should still get checked.

"Mammograms are painful."

- You may feel uncomfortable, but the pain is usually mild and goes away once the mammogram is done.
- Finding breast cancer early is worth any brief discomfort.

"I don't need mammograms. I'm too old to get breast cancer now."

- You are never too old to get breast cancer. In fact, the older you are, the higher your risk. Talk with your doctor about whether continuing mammograms at age 75 or older is right for you.



Where to Get a Mammogram

Ask your doctor about getting a mammogram. If you do not have a health care provider, call 311 to find a provider near you.

Mammograms are covered by health insurance plans, including private insurance, Medicaid and Medicare.

If you are uninsured or underinsured, many hospitals and other organizations provide free and low-cost screenings.



More Information

Visit nyc.gov/health and search for “breast cancer.”

NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

www.health.state.ny.us/nysdoh/cancer/center/publication.htm

AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY

www.cancer.org

800-4-CANCER (800-422-6237)

CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

www.cdc.gov/cancer/nbccedp

NATIONAL CANCER INSTITUTE

www.cancer.gov/types/breast