

BREAST HEALTH

You need to know what your breasts normally look and feel like. Look at and feel your breasts when you have a shower to see if there are any changes. Ask your doctor if you are doing it properly.

Ask your doctor to do a breast health check once every year.

See your doctor if you are worried or you notice a change or a lump in your breast. The sooner you see your doctor the better. Changes in your breast might be an early sign of something wrong like breast cancer. Breast cancer is common in older women. Breast cancer can be treated.



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What is a mammogram

Once you turn 50 years old you can have an x-ray of your breasts to find any changes that might mean cancer. This x-ray is called a mammogram.

If other people in your family have had breast cancer you can have a mammogram before you turn 50.

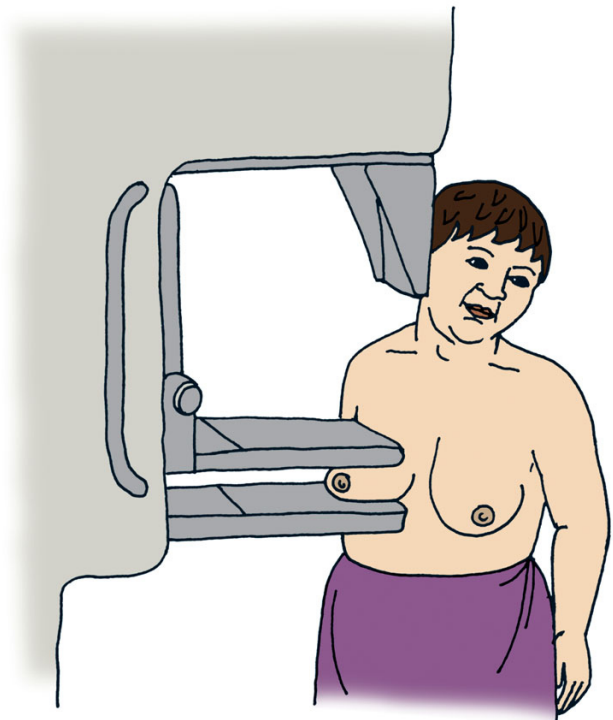
You have this test at least every 2 years.

You can decide whether you want to have a mammogram or not. It is your decision.

What happens when you have a mammogram

To have a mammogram you will have to take off your top and bra. The person taking the x-ray will place your breast on the x-ray machine. This is not sexual touching.

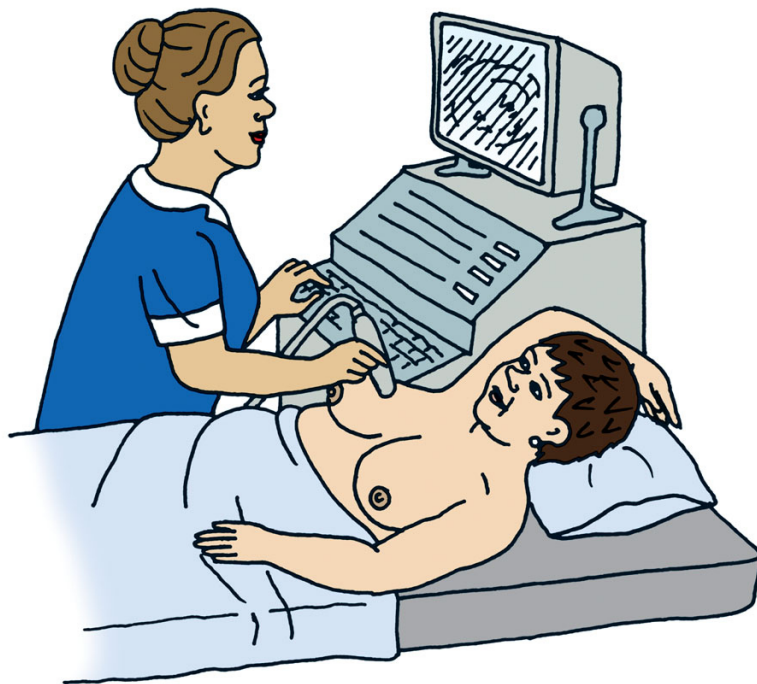
The machine will feel cold and will slowly squeeze your breast which might hurt a little bit. The test will only last a few minutes. You need to stay still so they can get a good picture.



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Sometimes an x-ray is not enough and you will be asked to have an ultrasound.

To have an ultrasound you will have to take off your top and bra and lay down on the examination bed. The person doing the ultrasound will put some cold jelly on your breasts. They rub a metal wand on your breasts. This takes a special picture of inside your breast. It is gentle. This is not sexual touching.



If the doctor thinks there might be a problem you may have to have more tests. You can talk to your doctor about what they will feel like.

You can talk to other women who have had a mammogram to hear what it was like.

BREAST HEALTH

Where can you find out more

BreastScreen NSW

Information about getting a mammogram.



132 050 (toll free)



www.bsnsw.org.au

Other fact sheets in this series you may want to read

ASKING QUESTIONS ABOUT YOU

HAVING A PAP TEST