

commit: Mammograms

do you know the facts?

Mammograms are still the best way to find breast cancer early. And finding breast cancer early is still the best way to survive it. Review these mammogram facts and discuss them with your health care professional. If you are age 40 or older, the American Cancer Society recommends having a mammogram once a year.

- A mammogram is an x-ray of your breast.
- A mammogram uses only a very small dose of radiation. It does not increase your chances of getting breast cancer.
- Mammograms have helped more women than ever before survive breast cancer.
- Your health care provider will tell you if you need a mammogram more often than what's usually recommended.
- Mammograms are uncomfortable but not unbearable. Having very large or very small breasts doesn't matter. The equipment will work either way.
- If you have dense breast tissue, your health care provider may recommend a digital mammogram, which can provide a more accurate image than a film mammogram.
- For women over 50 who don't have dense breast tissue, film mammography has been shown to be just as good as digital.
- If you don't have insurance, you likely can find low-cost or free mammograms near you by calling the national toll-free Breast Care Helpline at 1- 800 - IM - AWARE (1-800-462-9273), or visit www.komen.org

breast cancer screening guidelines

| Screening Type | Age | How Often |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Mammogram | 40+ | Every year |
| Breast Exam by a Health Care Professional | 20 – 39 40 and older | Every 3 years Every year |
| Breast Self-Exam | 20+ | Periodically |

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10 questions to ask

1. When should I have a mammogram?
2. Where can I find a low-cost or free one?
3. How do I arrange for a mammogram?
4. Where is the closest mammogram center?
5. How will I get my mammogram results?
6. Should I get a digital mammogram?
7. I have very small breasts. Will a mammogram work for me?
8. I've never had a mammogram because I'm really scared about getting breast cancer. What should I do?
9. Do I need a prescription for a mammogram or can I just get one?
10. If my mammogram isn't normal, what should I do next and who can guide me?

newest advances

Digital Mammography. This technology can upload images and store them on a computer instead of developing them into film and they can be manipulated – just like digital camera images. A digital mammogram takes less time – there's no waiting for film to be developed – and it uses less radiation than film mammography. However, only about 11 percent of the country's 8,800 digital mammography facilities are digital, though it's just a matter of time (and money) before they all convert.

finding answers

American Cancer Society
1-800-227-2345
www.cancer.org
Breastcancer.org
www.breastcancer.org

National Women's Health
Resource Center
1-877-986-9472
www.healthyywomen.org