



*FREE breast screening
every two years
for women aged 45 to 69*



Early detection is your **best** protection

Do I need breast screening?

- Nearly 10 percent of New Zealand women will develop breast cancer in their lives which means that 90 percent will not.
- The risk of breast cancer increases as you get older. Three-quarters of women who get it are over 50.
- Most women who get breast cancer have no close relatives with the disease.
- Breast screening does not stop you getting cancer but does reduce your chance of dying from it.



Does breast screening work?

Breast screening:

- can show changes in the breast before anything can be seen or felt. In most cases the changes will not be cancer
- is safe because only very small amounts of radiation are used in two-yearly screening
- can detect breast cancer early, which means a very good chance of successful treatment
- can detect about 85 percent of cancers in women over 50 and 75 percent in women under 50
- may suggest that something is not right when really it is OK. For example it may show a lump that is not cancer
- cannot prevent you getting breast cancer and cannot always prevent death from breast cancer.

A cancer may also develop in between your two-yearly screening if it is fast growing or it was not seen on the mammogram.

So breast screening is not perfect but it is the only proven way of finding breast cancer early enough to reduce your risk of dying of breast cancer.



What is BreastScreen Aotearoa?

- BreastScreen Aotearoa is a free national breast screening programme. You can have a free mammogram every two years through BreastScreen Aotearoa if you meet all of the following:
 - are aged 45 to 69
 - have no symptoms of breast cancer
 - have not had a mammogram in the last 12 months
 - are not pregnant or breastfeeding
 - are eligible for public health services in New Zealand*.
- If you are between 45–69 years and have been screened with BreastScreen Aotearoa before, you will get a letter inviting you to come back.
- All other women aged 45–69 without breast symptoms, can now register for the programme by ringing 0800 270 200. You should also ring this number if you have changed your address since your last screen. You can also register online.
- BreastScreen Aotearoa has centres around New Zealand and mobile screening units that travel to places that do not have centres.

* Details of who is eligible for publicly funded (free or subsidised) personal health and disability services in New Zealand can be seen at www.health.govt.nz/eligibility

What happens when I go to Breast

- You may bring a support person or member of your whānau with you.
- You will be welcomed and asked to fill in a form.
- Before you have the mammogram you will be asked to undress to the waist so wear clothing that is easy to remove.
- You will be offered a gown to wear.
- When you have a mammogram, the radiographer who takes the X-rays places each breast carefully between two plates on the X-ray machine.



Screen Aotearoa?

- The plates hold the breast firmly for a few seconds while the pictures are taken. This is important to get the best picture.
- Many women find this uncomfortable and some find it painful. It does not harm the breasts.
- The whole visit should take about 30 minutes.
- For most women the result will be normal.
- We will send you your results in about two weeks.
- A small number of women will be phoned to come back because something needs checking.
- Most women recalled will not have breast cancer.

You will get more details about the risks and benefits from BreastScreen Aotearoa before you agree to have a mammogram.

**Phone 0800 270 200 or visit
www.breastscreen.govt.nz
for more information.**

*Women of any age who feel
or notice anything unusual about
their breasts, at any time,
should see their doctor.*

Early detection is your **best** protection



FREEPHONE

0800 270 200

www.breastscreen.govt.nz

