



Breast screening with implants

If you have breast implants, this fact sheet may answer some of your questions about having a breast screen.

Can I have a breast screen if I have implants?

Yes. If you have breast implants, you can have regular breast screens every two years. **Before** making an appointment you may wish to discuss with your doctor whether breast screening is suitable for you. Implants make it harder to see breast tissue on standard mammograms. Additional images will be needed to show as much breast tissue as possible. You will need a slightly longer appointment (approximately 20 minutes).

Will I be told if any problems are found with my implant?

No, BreastScreen Victoria will not advise you about changes or problems. If you notice a problem or are concerned about your implants, please see your doctor as soon as possible.

Will it hurt?

You may experience some discomfort as the implant usually needs to be moved back to expose the maximum amount of breast tissue. Most people find that this discomfort does not last long. If you experience pain during the breast screen, please let the radiographer know. You may also ask for the procedure to stop at any time.

Will all breast cancers be found?

Breast screens can find most breast cancers present at the time of screening but, like other medical tests, they are not 100% accurate. Breast implants can cover some of the breast tissue, which may make it more difficult to find small breast cancers.

Is it safe for me to have regular breast screens?

Breast screening is generally safe for those with implants. However, it is important that you consider the risks alongside the benefits before deciding to attend BreastScreen. The risks are:

- There is an extremely small chance that the pressure placed on the implant during the breast screen (mammogram) could cause the implants to rupture or break.
- If you have implants which have already ruptured or started to leak, it is possible that having a breast screen could increase the amount of silicone or saline (depending on the type of implant) spreading into the breast tissue.
- In some implants, very small amounts of silicone or saline (depending on the implant) pass through the pores of the implant shell. This is sometimes called 'bleeding' of the implant. At present it is not known whether breast screening increases 'bleeding' of implants.
- There is a small chance that breast screening will change the shape of the breasts by dispersing the fibrous capsule that often grows around the implant. The breast may feel softer after screening. However, it cannot be guaranteed that both breasts will be affected equally.
- Because of the extra views required, those with implants will experience more exposure to radiation during breast screening than those without implants.

If I notice a problem with my implants, can they be assessed through BreastScreen Victoria?

No. If you notice a problem with your implants please see your doctor as soon as possible. Implant problems will not be assessed by BreastScreen Victoria.

If I have a breast implant, am I more likely to develop cancer?

At present there is no evidence that those who have breast implants are more likely to develop breast cancer.

How often should I have a breast screen if I have implants?

You should discuss this with your doctor. BreastScreen Victoria offers free breast screens every two years. Whether or not you have regular breast screens, it is important to get to know your breasts and what is normal for you. If, at any time, you notice an unusual change in your breasts such as a lump, pain or discharge from the nipple, please visit your doctor without delay.

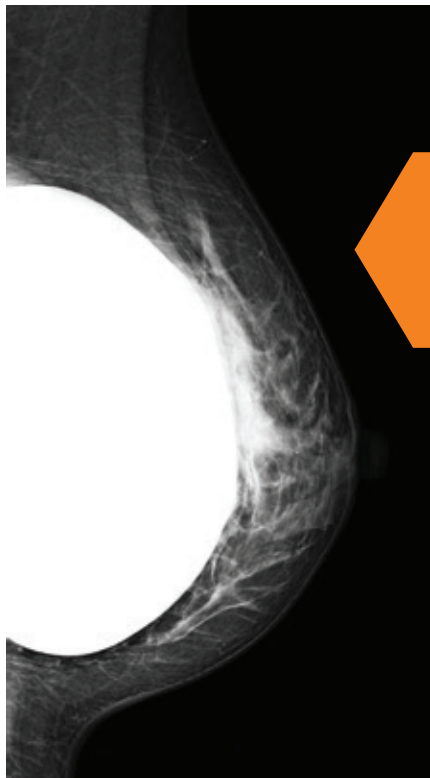


Image shows the implant in place. The implant covers some of your breast tissue.

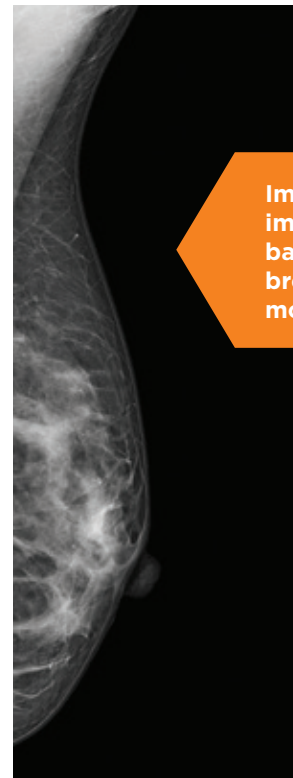


Image shows the implant pushed back allowing your breast tissue to be more clearly seen.

Book at breastscreen.org.au or call **13 20 50**



For more information or to change your details, visit breastscreen.org.au or call **13 20 50**



For interpreter assistance call **13 14 50**



Translated information: breastscreen.org.au/translations

TTY 13 36 77 if you have hearing or speech difficulties



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