

Women with a previous diagnosis of breast cancer



BreastScreen
Victoria

Caring about Women

Information about having breast screening with BreastScreen Victoria for women who have been diagnosed with breast cancer.

Who is BreastScreen Victoria?

BreastScreen Victoria is part of BreastScreen Australia the national screening program for breast cancer. BreastScreen Victoria invites women aged 50-74 who do not have breast symptoms for free breast screens (mammograms).

Regular check-ups are important

If you have been diagnosed with breast cancer in the past and have had surgery to have a lump or your breast removed, it is very important that you have regular check-ups.

This is because women who have been diagnosed with breast cancer in the past have an increased risk of developing breast cancer again.

If you have had breast cancer, your regular check-ups should involve:

- annual **physical examination** of your breasts by a doctor
- annual **mammograms**
- **other tests** that may be required.

Can I have free breast screens if I have had breast cancer?

For the **first five years** after a diagnosis of breast cancer, a woman will need close follow-up by a doctor.

After this, women who have had breast cancer are able to have free breast screens through BreastScreen Victoria with the approval of their treating doctor.

We recommend you discuss if screening through BreastScreen Victoria is suitable for you **before** booking an appointment.

This includes women who have had a mastectomy, who can have screening of the other breast. If you have had a double mastectomy (both breasts removed), there is no remaining breast tissue so there is no need to have breast screens.

How can I make an appointment with BreastScreen?

You can book an appointment online at **breastscreen.org.au** or call **13 20 50**.

We will then send you a reminder to make a breast screening appointment annually until you reach the age of 74. From the age of 74 you will no longer be sent a reminder, but you can continue to have a free breast screen every year.

What screening does BreastScreen provide?

BreastScreen provides only standard breast screens (mammograms). Two pictures will be taken of each breast: one from the side and one from the top. Women who have had breast cancer and had a lump removed, will have mammograms of both breasts. Women who have had a breast removed will have their other breast screened.

You will only be recalled for further tests (including special views and ultrasound) if your breast screen needs further investigation.

We do not routinely provide other tests such as ultrasound if the breast screen is normal. You should discuss with your doctor if other tests are required.

Bring your previous films

It is very important that we have **all your previous mammograms** for comparison.

You may have them in a film bag or on a CD.

We will have any previous BreastScreen films, so you do not need to provide these.

If you don't have your previous images you will need to ask your treating doctor or the imaging centre you attended to provide you with copies. This should be easy to do as images are now stored electronically.

Your breast screen will be looked at by two or more health professionals specially trained in screen mammograms.

Your breast cancer treatment may have caused changes to your breasts. So we will need to compare your screening images with previous mammograms.

Bringing your previous films may prevent you being called back for unnecessary further tests.

When will I receive my results?

Your results will be sent to you as soon as possible, usually within two to six weeks. Your results will say either 'no evidence of breast cancer' or 'recalled for further tests' with information about what happens next.

Your doctor and/or nominated specialist will also receive a copy of your results if you have agreed to this.

See your doctor regularly

You should continue to see your doctor for annual **physical examination** of your breasts.

What else can I do?

Between check-ups, it's a good idea to get to know the normal look and feel of your breasts and see your doctor immediately if you notice any unusual change in your breasts, such as a lump, pain or nipple discharge, even if your breast screen result was normal.

Keep yourself as healthy as possible and pay attention to your general health and fitness. It's important to eat a balanced diet, minimise alcohol intake and keep your weight within a healthy range to reduce the risk of your breast cancer returning.

I can have breast screens with BreastScreen Victoria if:

It's **more than 5 years** since my breast cancer diagnosis and my doctor is supportive

I have discussed screening with my **doctor**

I bring all my **previous films**

I see my doctor for **annual physical examinations**

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



For more information: **breastscreen.org.au**



Call **13 14 50** and ask to be connected to BreastScreen Victoria



Translated information: **breastscreen.org.au/translations**

TTY 13 36 77 if you have hearing or speech difficulties



BreastScreen Victoria acknowledges the support of the Victorian Government.