



# Honouring the First Nations path of well-being

## What is cancer screening?

Cancer screening means taking a test that can find cancer before you have any symptoms.

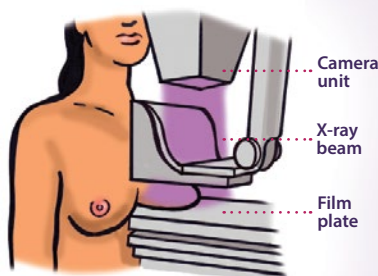
Finding cancer early is one of the best ways we have of beating it. Getting screened regularly leads to healthier and happier lives for you, your family, and your community.

## What is the Ontario Breast Screening Program (OBSP)?

The Ontario Breast Screening Program is a screening program that encourages women in Ontario to test for breast cancer. The best way to screen for breast cancer is with a mammogram. **Women aged 50 to 74 years should go to the Ontario Breast Screening Program for regular mammograms usually every 2 years.** When you turn 50 years of age, OBSP will send you a letter inviting you to be screened for breast cancer and gives you information on how to get screened. *Women who are eligible for breast cancer screening can book their own appointment in the OBSP – no doctor's referral is needed! For status First Nation women, you must work with your health care provider to ensure medical travel is provided through Non-Insured Health Benefits.*

## MAMMOGRAM PROCEDURE

In mammography, each breast is compressed horizontally, then diagonally and an x-ray is taken of each position.



## What happens during my mammogram appointment? (see illustration)

- A technologist specializing in mammography will place your breast on a special x-ray machine.
- A plastic plate will be lowered down to slowly flatten the breast and hold it in place for a few seconds while the picture is taken.
- Some women find mammograms uncomfortable. You will feel some pressure on your breast, but it will only last for a few seconds.
- There will be two pictures taken of each breast. The whole appointment will only take about twenty minutes from start to finish.

## What happens after my mammogram appointment?

- A radiologist will look at the pictures for unusual tissue in the breasts.
- Both you and your health care provider will receive the results of the test.
- If your test is normal – you will receive a reminder letter from the OBSP to be screened again usually every two years.
- If your test is abnormal – your health care provider will arrange for you to have more tests.

**Nine out of ten women who need more testing will not have breast cancer.**

## What is breast cancer? Does it affect us?

Breast cancer is the most common cancer among women in Canada. Breast cancer occurs when the cells in the breasts grow in an out-of-control way, creating lumps or tumours. Eight out of ten breast cancers are found in women over the age of 50<sup>1</sup>. Although Ontario First Nations women are slightly less likely to be diagnosed with breast cancer, **breast cancers found in First Nations women are more likely to be diagnosed at a later stage compared to other Ontario women.** First Nations women in Ontario need to get screened regularly to make sure we can catch cancer early enough for it to be successfully treated.

**Screening is the best thing you can do to find breast cancer early.**

### Are you at risk?

The two most common risk factors of developing breast cancer are:

1. Being a woman
2. Increasing age

However, some women are at a higher risk of developing breast cancer than other women; for example, women who have a lot of close family members with breast cancer or women who have been identified as being at high risk through genetic testing. Women who have been identified as high risk for breast cancer and are between the ages of 30 and 69 years old should get a mammogram as well as an MRI (special x-ray test) done every year.

If you think you may be at a high risk for breast cancer, contact your health care provider to see if the Ontario Breast Screening Program's high risk screening program is right for you.

### The path to wellness

A healthy lifestyle may reduce your chance of getting breast cancer, as well as many other diseases. Here are some simple things you can do:

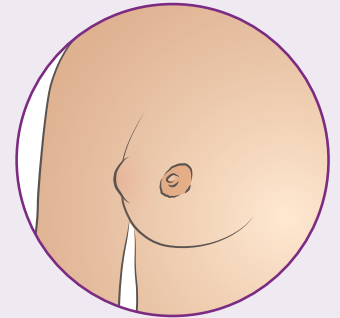
- Maintain a healthy body weight
- Be physically active
- Eat a healthy diet
- Be smoke free
- Limit alcohol
- Be sun safe

1. While breast cancer can also occur in men, it is uncommon.

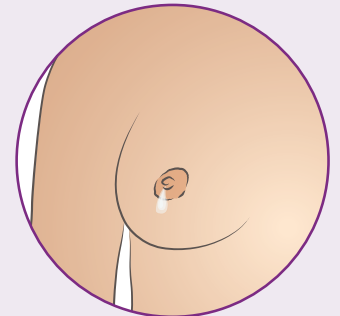
## BREAST AWARENESS

Contact your health care provider if you notice:

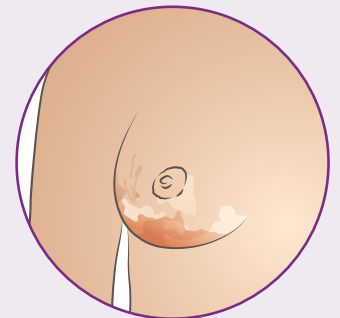
### A lump or dimpling



### Changes in your nipple or fluid leaking from the nipple



### Skin changes or redness that does not go away



### Any other changes in your breasts

If you notice any changes with your breasts or have concerns, contact your health care provider. Most changes are non-cancerous, but should be checked right away.

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It is easy to get screened! To book your mammogram, call: **1-800-668-9304**.

For more information, please visit:  
**ontario.ca/screenforlife**

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