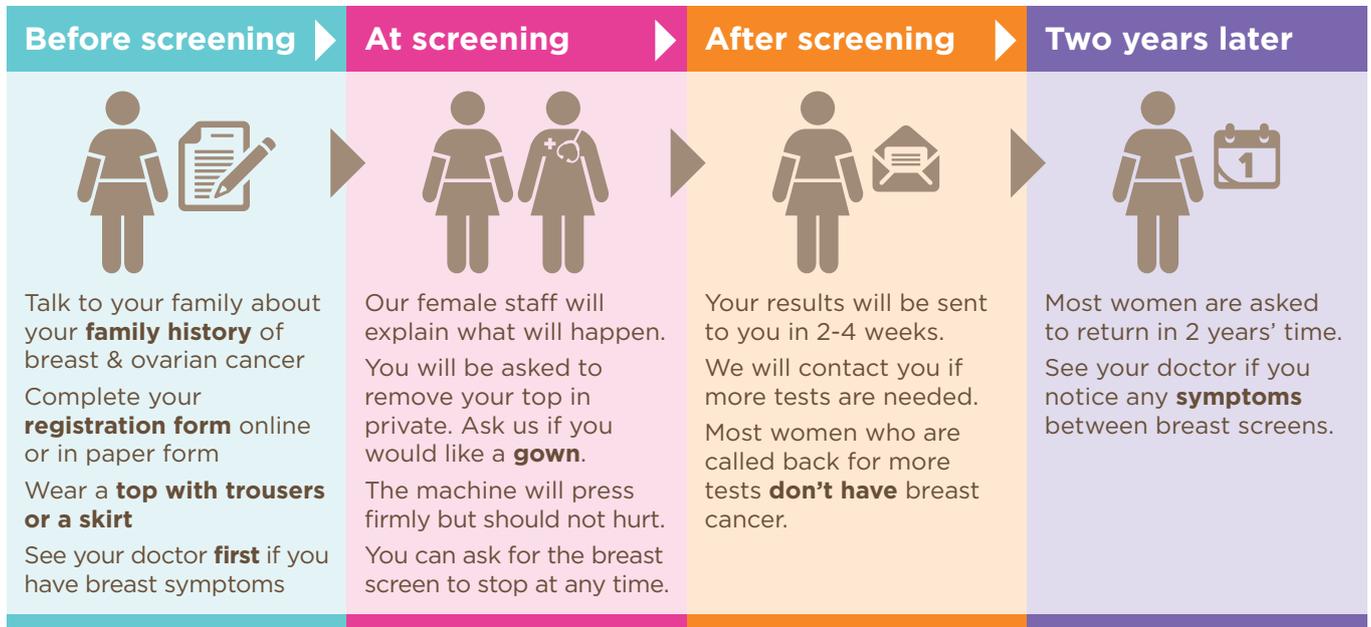


BreastScreen Victoria information sheet



BreastScreen
Victoria

Caring about Women



Before screening

About BreastScreen Victoria

BreastScreen Victoria offers free breast screens to women aged 40 and over. BreastScreen Victoria contracts public and private Health Service Providers to deliver breast screening in Victoria. BreastScreen Victoria is part of BreastScreen Australia, the national screening program for breast cancer.

What is a breast screen?

A breast screen is a picture of the breast (also called a mammogram). Breast screens can find cancers that are too small to see or feel. The earlier breast cancer is found the better the chance of a positive outcome.

What if I have breast symptoms or changes?

If you have noticed an unusual change in your breasts such as a lump, pain or discharge from the nipple, it is important that you visit your doctor as soon as possible, **before your appointment** at BreastScreen Victoria.

Are breast screens safe?

Each time you have a breast screen, your breasts are exposed to a very small amount of radiation. Research shows that the benefits of breast screens in finding cancer early outweigh any radiation risks.

Obtaining your breast images

Viewing your previous breast images or mammogram improves the accuracy of your screening result. When you booked your appointment, we asked if your last mammogram was outside the BreastScreen Victoria program. We also offered to obtain these electronically with your consent. Alternatively we asked that you bring your breast images to your appointment.

Family history

BreastScreen Victoria collects information about women's family history of breast and ovarian cancer so we can provide them with better care. BreastScreen uses this information to estimate personal risk of developing breast cancer. Before completing your registration form, please talk to your family about your family history. For more information go to breastscreen.org.au/familyhistory

What if I have breast implants?

Most women with implants can have breast screens. Please read the fact sheet titled Breast screening for women with implants. Go to breastscreen.org.au/Breast-Screening/The-Facts or printed copies are available at the screening clinics.

What should I wear to my appointment?

Wear a skirt or slacks and a top, so you can remove your top for the breast screen.

At screening

What will happen at my appointment?

You will be welcomed by a BreastScreen Victoria staff member who will explain what happens at the clinic. A female mammographer will take you into the screening room. Please ask us if you would like to wear a gown. When you are ready, the mammographer will take at least two pictures of each breast.

Can I talk to the mammographer?

Yes, communicating with your mammographer is important, especially if you have any concerns. They will be happy to answer any questions.

Will it hurt?

During a breast screen it is normal to feel discomfort, but this should only last a few seconds. This is because your breasts need to be pressed firmly between two plates in the screening machine so that a clear picture can be taken. Please tell your mammographer if you feel any pain. She will work with you to make sure that the breast screen is as comfortable as possible. **You can ask the mammographer to stop the breast screen at any time.**

Do we have to compress your breasts?

Yes we do, but for very important reasons. Compression holds the breasts still and spreads out and separates the breast tissue so that we get a clear picture on the mammogram.

After screening

When will I get my results?

Your mammogram will be independently examined by two or more specially trained health professionals. Your results will be sent to you within 2-4 weeks. Your results will also be sent to your doctor if you provided their details.

What if I am asked to come back for further tests?

Sometimes women will be asked to come back to BreastScreen for more tests. This does not mean breast cancer is present, but sometimes more tests are needed to make sure. This happens more often for women having a mammogram for the first time. This is usually

because there are no other mammograms to compare with. Most women who are called back for further tests do not have breast cancer.

Will a breast screen find all cancers?

Breast screens are the most effective test for finding breast cancer early. However, they are not 100% accurate. There is a small chance that a screening mammogram will look normal even if a breast cancer is present.

Two years later

What happens when my next breast screen is due?

A breast screen every two years is the best way to find breast cancer early. BreastScreen Victoria will send you a reminder letter when your next breast screen is due. Women in their 40s or over 74 will not receive a reminder letter but are able to make an appointment with us every two years.

What else should I do between breast screens?

Even if you have two-yearly breast screens, it is important to be breast aware because breast cancer can develop at any time. We recommend you get to know the normal look and feel of your breasts and see your doctor immediately if you notice any unusual changes, such as lumps, pain or nipple discharge.

Your privacy

BreastScreen Victoria uses the information you provide and your test results, to screen for breast cancer and provide follow-up including a reminder when you are next due to screen. Only authorised people have access to your information. We will only use or release information that identifies you with your consent, or where we are required to do so under law. Access to your information for research will only be provided with ethical approval. Go to breastscreen.org.au/privacy

Contact us: email info@breastscreen.org.au or call **13 20 50**

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



BreastScreen Victoria acknowledges the support of the Victorian Government.