



# Breast Screening

All you need to know



States of Guernsey  
Hospital Services

## What is breast screening?

Breast screening (mammogram) is an X-ray examination of the breast that involves a very low dose of radiation. Breast screening can detect abnormalities in the breast tissue that may be too small for you or your doctor to see or feel.



It's free



It takes about  
10 minutes



It doesn't need a  
doctor's referral



It is provided by  
female radiographers

## Why is breast screening important?

Breast cancer is one of the most common female cancers in the Bailiwick of Guernsey and the risk of developing breast cancer increases as you get older. Breast screening can detect signs of breast cancer early even if you don't have symptoms.

### Look out for your screening invite

Women aged 50 -75 are invited for breast screening every 2 years. Women over 75 are encouraged to make their own appointment with the breast unit.

## Symptoms to look out for

### Look for...



A change in size or shape of your breast.



A change to the nipple, such as crusting, an ulcer, redness or an inversion.



Nipple discharge that occurs without squeezing.



A change to the skin of your breast, such as redness or dimpling.

### Feel for...



A new lump or lumpiness, especially if it's only in one breast.



An unusual pain in your breast or armpit that doesn't go away.



**Please remember that anyone of any age worried about any unusual symptoms such as lumps, pain or nipple discharge should contact their GP immediately.**

## What happens at the screening appointment?

A specialist female radiographer will explain the screening test to you. She will place your breast on a special X-ray machine and will usually take two pictures of each breast.

You may feel a little discomfort and pain, but this should only last a few seconds while your breast is being compressed.

## Preparing for your mammogram

To have a mammogram, you need to undress to the waist, so it is a good idea to wear a separate top instead of a dress. Please do not use a spray deodorant or talcum powder as this may show up on your mammogram. You can use roll-on deodorant.



## When will I get my result?

Your results will be posted to you and to your GP within 3-4 weeks. This will tell you if your results are normal or if you need a repeat mammogram or further tests.

If you don't receive your result letter, or have questions about your result, contact the Breast Screening Unit on 223730.

## What else do I need to know?

Mammograms are the best way to find breast cancer early. But like any test, they have limitations too. Mammograms may miss some breast cancers. Also, some cancers may develop between screenings. Some breast cancers that are diagnosed through screening may never cause harm to a woman during her lifetime. Lastly, not all cancers found at screening can be treated successfully.

## Do I still need breast screening if...

I have not accepted previous invitations for breast screening? **Yes**

I have had mammograms elsewhere? **Yes (If more than 12 months ago)**

I have a disability or need additional assistance? **Yes**

I have implants? **Yes**

## How can I stay breast aware?

Keep breast aware including between breast screening appointments as you can develop breast cancer at any time. Being breast aware is as easy as TLC:

- 1 Touch** and feel your breasts regularly. Can you feel anything unusual?
- 2 Look** for changes. Is there any change in shape or texture?
- 3 Check** with your GP straight away if you notice anything unusual and attend breast screening if invited.

## What can I do to reduce my risk of breast cancer?

As well as attending breast cancer screening, we advise:



Having a healthy diet:

- Eat plenty of whole grains, pulses, vegetables and fruits.
- Limit high-calorie foods (foods high in sugar or fat) and avoid sugary drinks.
- Avoid processed meat; limit red meat and foods high in salt.



Being more active in everyday life, this includes walking more and sitting less. 30 minutes exercise 5 times a week is the recommendation.



Getting to, and keeping a healthy weight.



Limiting the amount of alcohol intake to no more than 14 units per week.



Stopping smoking - Quitline Tel: **220021** is free and available to all for help and support with quitting.



Being breast aware - check your breasts regularly -  
Speak to your GP if you've any worries about unusual breast changes.

Advice can be found at [www.gov.gg/healthyliving](http://www.gov.gg/healthyliving)

## What happens to my mammograms after screening?

The Breast Unit will store your mammograms securely for at least 8 years. Your data may be shared with other teams of the service and may be used for service improvement, research, education and training. Your information will be processed fairly and lawfully and in line with the Data Protection (Bailiwick of Guernsey) Law, 2017.

If you do not want to be invited for breast screening, you can contact the breast screening office on 223730.



**If you are worried about your screening appointments and follow-up tests, contact your GP or the breast unit for support and advice.**



**Make time for breast screening. It only takes 10mins.**

## Where can I get more information?

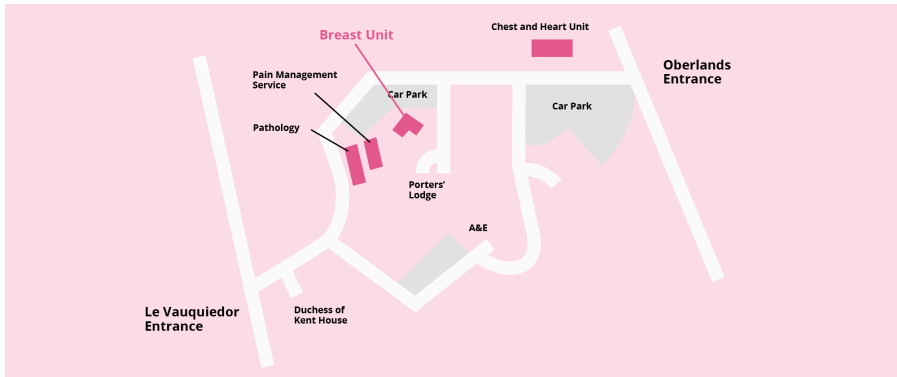
If you have any questions or would like further information on breast cancer or breast screening:



Speak to your GP



Contact the breast screening unit on **223730**



Useful information on breast screening and awareness can also be found at:

[gov.gg/screening](http://gov.gg/screening)

[pinkladies.org.gg](http://pinkladies.org.gg)

[cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/breast-cancer](http://cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/breast-cancer)

[breastcancer.org](http://breastcancer.org)



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