

Even when you have been screened, you should stay breast aware and look at and feel your breasts regularly for any changes.

Be breast aware

No matter what age you are, it is important to always be breast aware.

- Know what is normal for your body.
- Know what changes you should look for.

What changes should I look and feel for?

- Any lumps or unusual thickening in your breast
- Dimpling, puckering or redness of the skin
- A nipple that appears to be pulled-in or flattened
- A rash or flaky or crusted skin around the nipple
- A change in the size or shape of your breast
- Swelling in your armpit or around your collarbone
- Constant pain in one part of your breast or armpit

Important: There are many reasons for changes in your breast. Most of them are harmless, but you should get any change checked. If you have any concerns or notice any changes, please visit your GP (family doctor) immediately, even if you have had a recent mammogram.

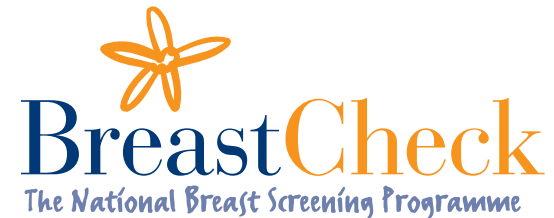
It's good to talk

BreastCheck is available for all women aged 50 to 64. If you have any concerns, you could find it helpful to talk about BreastCheck with your family and friends – particularly someone who has already used the service. You can also phone us free on 1800 45 45 55 if you have any questions.

More information

BreastCheck is a Government-funded programme and part of the National Cancer Screening Service.

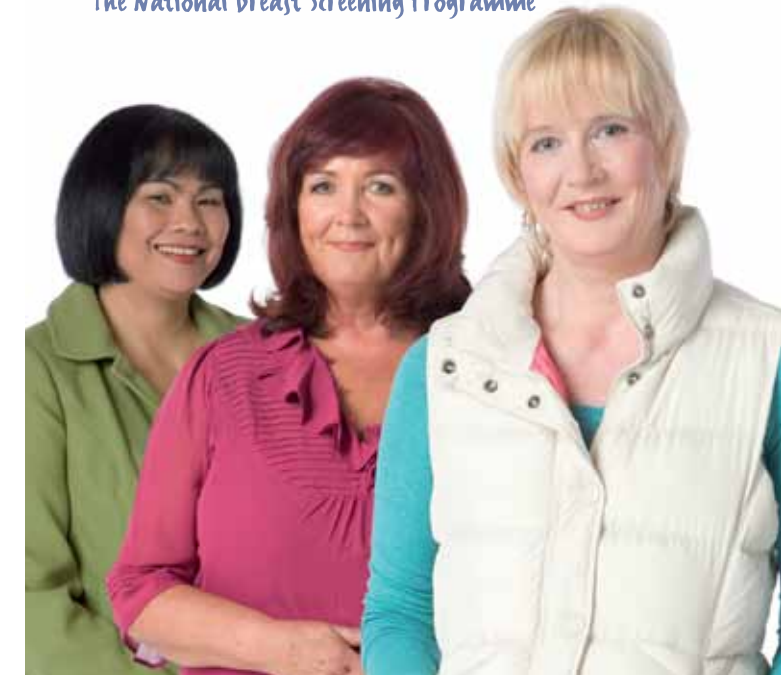
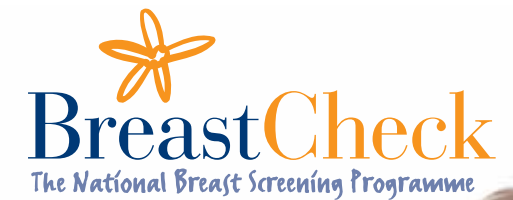
For more information, to register or to check if you are on the register, visit www.breastcheck.ie or Freephone 1800 45 45 55.



Other help available

Breast cancer can develop at any stage, so you should stay breast aware. If you notice any changes in your breasts, or are ever worried about any breast problem, go to your GP (family doctor) immediately. They can check your breasts and send you to a Specialist Breast Unit for a mammogram if you need one.

For more breast health information, to speak to a specialist nurse, or for a free breast awareness pack, call Action Breast Cancer, a programme of the Irish Cancer Society, on Freephone 1800 30 90 40.



About breast screening

It's quick, it's easy and it's free

Free breast screening service for women aged 50-64

Freephone 1800 45 45 55

It's quick, it's easy and it's free

www.breastcheck.ie

What is breast screening?

Breast screening means taking a mammogram (x-ray) of your breasts to look for breast cancer.

What is breast cancer?

Breast cancer occurs when normal breast cells begin to divide and grow in an abnormal way.

Breast screening can show breast cancers at an early stage, when they are too small for you or your doctor to see or feel.

Does screening prevent breast cancer?

Screening helps to find breast cancer at an early stage. A small number of cancers cannot be found by a mammogram, but if you go for regular screening, any changes will be found as early as possible. At this stage, breast cancer is easier to treat and you have a higher chance of a good recovery. Cancer can occur at any time and between mammograms.

What is BreastCheck?

BreastCheck – The National Breast Screening Programme is a free health service funded by the Government to offer women aged 50 to 64 a mammogram every two years.

Where did BreastCheck get my details?

BreastCheck puts together a register (list) of women eligible for screening from details supplied by the Department of Social Protection, General Medical Services (GMS), private health

insurers and people registering themselves. BreastCheck keeps your details and health records safe and confidential. If you do not want to take part in BreastCheck, please write to us and we will not contact you again.

BreastCheck encourages women to make sure they are on the register by contacting BreastCheck on Freephone 1800 45 45 55 or by checking online at www.breastcheck.ie.

What is a mammogram?

When you have a mammogram, a special x-ray machine is used to take a picture of your breasts. One at a time, your breasts are pressed between two special plates to take the x-ray. There has to be pressure to make sure that the mammogram is a high quality. The dose of radiation used in the mammogram is very small and is within recommended limits, so the risk to your health is very low.

Does a mammogram hurt?

A mammogram takes a few minutes and pressure is applied for a few seconds to each breast. There is no evidence that this pressure harms your breasts. Some women might find this uncomfortable or painful but normally just for the short time their breasts are being pressed.

Where do I go for my BreastCheck appointment?

It depends on where you live. Your appointment

could be in a BreastCheck unit beside a hospital or in a mobile screening unit.

Your BreastCheck appointment

- Your visit will take about 30 minutes in total.
- Your mammogram will only take a few minutes.
- You might need a longer screening appointment if you have breast implants, if you are deaf or blind or if you have mobility issues or an intellectual disability. Please let us know in advance if you might need extra time for your appointment.
- All BreastCheck screening units are fully accessible to people with disabilities.

We will post you the results of your mammogram within three weeks. We will also send a copy of your results to your (GP) family doctor.

Facts about breast cancer

- Breast cancer is one of the most common cancers among women in Ireland. About one in 12 women will get breast cancer in their lifetime.
- Women of any age can get breast cancer but the risk increases as you get older.
- Research shows that women aged 50 and over are at a higher risk of getting breast cancer.
- BreastCheck screens women aged 50 to 64, but women under age 50 and over age 65 are still at risk of getting breast cancer.

- If you are under age 50 or over 65 speak to your GP (family doctor) about your breast screening needs.
- If breast cancer is found early, it is likely to be easier to treat.

Facts about breast screening

- Screening is for women without symptoms.
- Breast screening helps find breast cancers at an early stage.
- Not all breast cancers can be found by a mammogram.
- Some non-invasive cancers (known as DCIS) will be found by screening. For more detailed information on DCIS and the benefits and limits of breast screening, see www.breastcheck.ie or freephone 1800 45 45 55.
- About 99% of women who have a BreastCheck mammogram get a normal result.

What puts you at risk of breast cancer?

Research shows that the following factors can put you at risk of breast cancer:

- being a woman (men can get breast cancer, but it is rare),
- getting older,
- having a history of breast cancer in your family, and
- your lifestyle, for example drinking too much alcohol, being overweight after menopause or not exercising enough.