

Calcifications

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Calcifications are small calcium deposits found in the breast. They look like white spots on a mammogram.

In most cases, calcifications are benign (not cancer) but they can sometimes be a sign of cancer.

Types of Calcifications

There are two types of calcifications.

Not cancer

- Large, round or well-defined calcifications are more likely to be benign.

Cancer

- Clusters or groups of tiny, irregularly-shaped calcifications may mean cancer. You may need more tests to make a diagnosis.

Causes of Calcifications

Calcifications are not caused by the calcium you eat or take as a medicine or supplement.

Possible causes of calcifications may include:

- breast cancer
- secretions or debris in the milk ducts
- a past injury or surgery to the breast
- fibroadenomas (common benign mass) or cysts (common fluid-filled mass)
- calcium deposits in the skin or blood vessels.

Additional Testing

If calcifications are found on your mammogram, your health care provider may ask you to have another mammogram or a biopsy. This will depend on where the calcifications are found in your breast, how many are found and the size of them.

Please talk with your health care provider if you have any questions or concerns.