

# Mammogram

*Breast cancer screening for transgender people*

## Breast Cancer Screening

Breast cancer screening is not just for people born female. As a transfeminine or transmasculine person, you may need a mammogram if you:

- have used feminizing hormones for 5 or more years
- had top surgery and some breast/chest tissue remains, and have or have not used masculinizing hormones.

Talk with your health care provider if you have any questions about your breast cancer risks or if you should have a mammogram.

## Mammogram

A mammogram is a low-dose digital X-ray of your breast/chest area. It uses very little radiation to get an image of your breast/chest tissue.

A mammogram is the only screening test that has been shown to increase the chance of surviving breast cancer.

Allina Health recommends having 3-D (three-dimensional) mammograms which provide higher quality images.

## Before Your Mammogram

- Tell your health care provider if you have any concerns about your breast/chest area.
- If you have a menstrual period, try to schedule your mammogram after your period. This is the time when your breast/chest area is less likely to be swollen and tender.

## Your Appointment

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_ a.m. / p.m.

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

If you need to cancel or reschedule, please call at least 24 hours before your scheduled appointment.

- If caffeine makes your breast/chest area sensitive or tender, do not eat or drink caffeine for a few days before the mammogram.
- If you have had mammograms at another health care facility other than Allina Health in the last 10 years, bring the images and their reports with you to your exam or have them mailed or electronically sent to the clinic before the day of your exam.
- Do not wear deodorant, powder, perfume or lotion until after the mammogram.

## During Your Mammogram

- A registered technologist with special training in mammography will perform the exam.
- You will be asked to undress from the waist up in a private dressing room.

**(over)**

- The technologist will give you a gown, robe, or wrap to wear. You will be asked to remove any deodorant, powder or lotion from your breast/chest area.
- You may be asked to wait in a shared waiting room. If you'd prefer to wait in a private waiting room, tell the technologist. They will be happy to accommodate you.
- The technologist will review your health history.
- You will stand or sit in front of the X-ray machine.
- The technologist will place your breast/chest tissue on the platform. The tissue will be compressed between two panels for a few seconds so the X-ray can get a clear image. You will feel pressure.
- After the exam, the technologist will review the images. They may have to do the X-rays again if they do not get a clear image of your breast/chest tissue.

## After Your Mammogram

- Your breast/chest area may feel sore. This is normal. If your breast/chest area continues to feel sore for more than 5 days, call your health care provider.
- If your breast/chest area feels tender, you may take acetaminophen (such as Tylenol®) or ibuprofen (such as Advil®) for 1 to 2 days. Take as directed.
- A radiologist will interpret (read) your mammogram. They will compare the new image with any past mammograms. The radiologist will send the results to you and your health care provider.

## A Call Back

You may be asked to come back for more images. This means the radiologist may want a more detailed view of a specific area of the breast/chest tissue. A "call back" does not mean you have cancer or that the mammogram was not done correctly.

## Breast Cancer Screening Schedule

When to start having mammograms to screen for breast cancer, and how often to have them, is a personal decision. It should be based on your preferences, your values and your risk for developing breast cancer.

Allina Health recommends that you and your health care provider together determine when mammograms are right for you.

Allina Health's mammogram screening guidelines are based on the 2015 American Cancer Society recommendations:

- **Age 25:** Have a risk assessment for breast cancer with your health care provider.
- **Ages 40 to 44:** Should consider having a mammogram every year with your decision informed by a shared decision making process with your health care provider. During this process, they will explain the benefits and harms of screening.
- **Ages 45 to 54:** Have a mammogram every year.
- **Age 55 and older:** Have a mammogram every year or transition to having one every 2 years. Continue to have mammograms as long as your health is good.

Your doctor may recommend a different schedule if you have a **higher than average risk** for breast cancer.

## Whom to Call With Questions

Call your health care provider if you have questions about the exam (other than insurance coverage).

## Insurance Coverage

It is important to understand your health care benefits before your exam. Please call your insurance provider to find out exactly what is and isn't covered under your plan, and how much you have to pay yourself.