

## Important

The main benefits and difficulties of screening for breast cancer are explained below:

- Most breast cancers are found at an early stage when there is a good chance of a successful recovery.
- In the UK, breast screening saves and estimated 1,300 lives each year.
- We will call back some women for more investigations if we are not sure about their mammogram. After more tests, we will find that many of these women will not have cancer.
- Screening may miss a small percentage of breast cancers.
- Not all breast cancers that are found at screening can be cured.
- Some women find mammography uncomfortable or painful, but normally just for a brief period of time.
- Screening can lead to unnecessary investigations and anxiety for some women.



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## Further information and support

If you have any questions about the service, you can:

- ask your doctor
- for appointment queries, ring 685339
- for assessment queries, ring 642570

## Useful links

[www.gov.im/screening](http://www.gov.im/screening)

[www.manxbreastcancersupportgroup.com](http://www.manxbreastcancersupportgroup.com)

[www.iombreastcare.co.uk](http://www.iombreastcare.co.uk)

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

Personal data that you provide to us will be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2002.

Where it is lawful to do so, in certain circumstances, we may share and transfer personal data that you provide to us to other departments, boards and offices within the Isle of Man Government. If you have any queries about what personal data is held about you or what processing of the data is being undertaken in relation to this service then please contact the Breast Screening Services, Manx Breast Unit, Nobles Hospital.

**The information on this document can be provided in large text or on audio tape on request.**

## Manx Breast Cancer Support Group

Nobles Hospital

Tel: 484950 or 454647

[www.manxbreastcancersupportgroup.com](http://www.manxbreastcancersupportgroup.com)

Charity No 1283

Registered Address: 11, Sunnybank Avenue, Birchill, Onchan

# Breast Screening Programme

## The Facts

Aged  
**50+**



## What is breast screening?

Breast screening (mammography) is an x-ray examination of the breasts.

- Breast screening can show breast cancers at an early stage, when they are too small for you or your doctor to see or feel.
- A mammogram takes a few minutes and involves a tiny dose of radiation, so the risk to your health is very small.
- Your visit to the Breast Screening Unit may take up to half an hour.

## Why is breast screening offered?

One in eight women will develop breast cancer at some time in their life. Breast cancer is more common in women over 50. Breast screening can help to find small changes in the breast before there are any other signs or symptoms. If changes are found at an early stage, there is a good chance of a successful outcome.

## Should all women have breast screening?

We invite all women aged between 50 and 70 for breast screening every two years.

Women over the age of 70 are not automatically invited for breast screening. However, you can still refer yourself for screening by contacting the breast screening appointments service directly to make an appointment, on 685339.

Whatever age you are, if you are ever worried about any breast problem, please contact your doctor who will refer you for a specialist opinion if necessary.

## What is the Isle of Man Breast Screening Programme?

The programme makes sure that if you are aged between 50 and 70 we will invite you for breast screening.

The screening programme will get your details from your DHSC registration. This record is made up from your doctor's list so it is important that your doctor always has your correct name and address.

If you move from the UK, or move to the UK in the future, your breast screening record will transfer to your new area.

As long as you are registered with a doctor in the Isle of Man we will start calling you in the year you turn 50.

You will be invited for your screening by the Greater Manchester Breast Screening Programme who are undertaking the administrative process of the Isle of Man Breast Screening call/recall programme.

## Where do I go for breast screening?

The Breast Screening Unit is based at:

Manx Breast Unit  
Nobles Hospital  
Tel: 642570.

On the day of your appointment please do not use deodorant, talc or cream on your breasts or armpits as these can alter the appearance of the mammogram.

## What happens during breast screening?

When you arrive, feel free to ask any questions you have about breast screening.

When you have undressed and are ready and comfortable, a Radiographer will explain mammography to you and ask a few questions.

Two x-rays (mammograms) are taken of each breast.

This can be a little uncomfortable as your breast is placed between an x-ray detector and a compression plate. Each x-ray only takes a few seconds.

## Do I have to undress?

Yes; you will be asked to undress completely down to your waist, so it is a good idea to wear a separate top and trousers or a skirt instead of a dress.

## Does breast screening hurt?

Some women find mammography uncomfortable and some find it painful as the breasts have to be held firmly in position and pressed to take a good x-ray. If you do experience pain it usually only lasts for a few seconds, although it may continue for some time in a small number of women.

## When do I get my results?

When you have had the mammogram, the Radiographer will tell you how and approximately when you will get your results. Make sure you have received this information before you leave the Unit.

## What does it mean if I am called back?

Some women (about one in every 20 who are screened) are called back because the appearance of the x-ray suggests that more tests are needed. Do not be surprised if we call you back. Most queries raised by mammography are not due to

cancer. Most women will not have any problems and we will call them back again in two years' time as part of the routine screening process.

## What if I need treatment?

If we call you back and you need treatment, a specialist team will look after you. They will make sure that you get a high quality of care and treatment at all times.



## How reliable is breast screening?

Mammography is the most reliable way of detecting breast cancer early but, like other screening tests, it is not perfect.

For example:

- Some cancers are very difficult to see on the x-ray;
- Mammograms can sometimes pick up cancers that cannot be felt as a lump;
- Some cancers, even though they are there, cannot be seen on the x-ray at all;
- The persons reading the x-ray may miss the cancer (this will happen occasionally, no matter how experienced the reader is);
- Screening can lead to unnecessary investigations and anxiety for some women. The Advisory Committee on Breast Cancer Screening shows that for every 2,000 women who are invited to join a programme over 10 years, five will have their lives prolonged and eight will be diagnosed and receive treatment even though they may have survived without intervention.

## Does breast screening prevent breast cancer?

No; breast screening only helps find breast cancer if it is already there. You should be aware of any changes in your breasts because breast cancer can develop at any time. Some women will develop breast cancer before their first mammogram or between mammograms.

There is a simple five-point breast awareness code that all women should remember:

- Know what is normal for you.
- Look at and feel your breasts.
- Know what changes to look for (lumps in breast or armpit, pain, discharge from the nipple or anything else unusual).
- Tell your doctor about any changes immediately.
- Consider attending for breast screening every two years if you are over 50.

There are many reasons for changes in the breast. Most of them are harmless but you should get all of them checked as there is a small chance that they could be the first sign of cancer.

Breast awareness and regular mammograms together offer you the best chance of finding breast cancer early.



## What happens to my x-rays once they have been read?

The Breast Screening Unit will keep your mammogram for at least eight years. They can then compare your latest mammogram with the ones you have had before.

For more information about the records we keep, you can ring 642570.