

Breast Cancer Screening Basics



Detecting breast cancer early is critical. Going in for an annual screening gives you peace of mind knowing that if there is an issue, it gets detected as quickly as possible.

Beginning at age 40, the American College of Radiology recommends **all women of average risk get an annual mammogram**. A woman is defined as having an "average risk" when she:

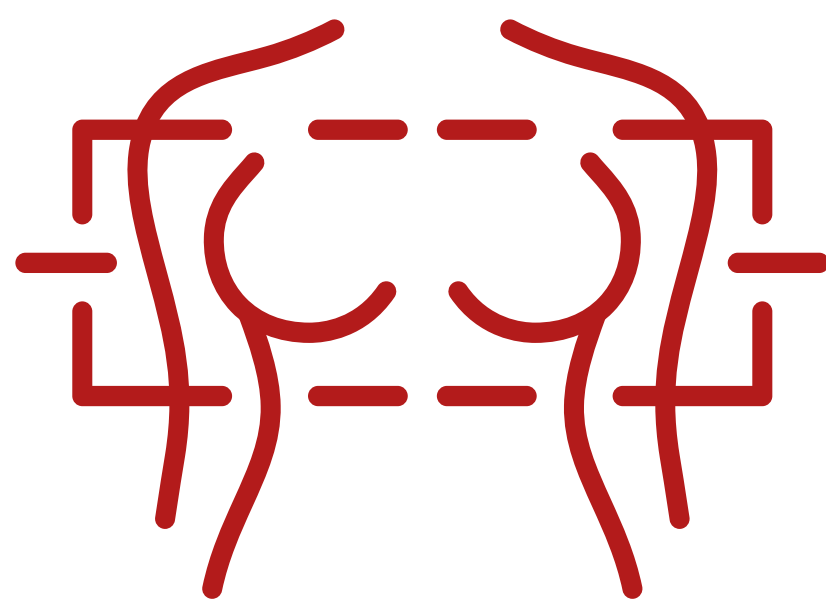
- **Does not have a genetic mutation that increases the risk of breast cancer** (the BRCA gene mutation, for example).
- **Does not have a history of chest radiation.**
- **Does not have a personal or family history** of breast cancer.



What Is a Mammogram?

A mammogram is an imaging test that takes X-rays of your breasts from different angles.

A 3D mammogram, or digital breast tomosynthesis, has become increasingly common.



A 3D mammogram provides more reliable images from the X-rays. The radiologist receives a clearer, three-dimensional image to inspect for signs of breast cancer.

At-Home Screening Options

It's always ideal to have annual mammograms. Between mammograms though, you can take a few steps to keep your mind at ease.

- **At least once a month**, while showering, use your three middle fingers on one hand to firmly press around your breasts and armpit areas to feel for any lumps or changes in texture.
- **Following your shower**, inspect your breasts for any changes in shape, color or texture, as well as for any discharge from the nipples.
- **When laying down on your back**, repeat the process you used in the shower to detect any lumps or unusual changes in texture.

Breast Cancer in Men

While it is rare, **men can develop breast cancer, too.**

Men should **watch for the same signs of breast cancer** (nipple discharge, along with changes in size, appearance and sensitivity) that women do.

Men of **all ages** should discuss their risk factors with their providers.



Have questions about your breast health?
Find a provider today: weillcornell.com/doctors