

What are the benefits of participating?

- **Mammography can save lives:** Mammography taken regularly reduces breast cancer mortality. Mammography can detect breast cancer, and precancerous lesions, that are only a few millimeters. Early detection often improves survival.
- **Less extensive treatment:** Since mammography can detect breast cancer at an early stage, before it has spread; the chances are good for less extensive treatment. The majority of women retain their breast after surgery.
- **Routine interdisciplinary follow-up:** If breast cancer is found, routine follow-up is guaranteed at the breast diagnostic center. Common national guidelines and interdisciplinary collaboration at the centers lead to high quality in diagnostics and treatment.
- **Knowledge for the common good:** All information from the mammography screening is stored permanently in the Cancer Registry; also the normal findings if the woman agrees to this. Half a million women are in the target group, which gives opportunities in monitoring the quality of health services and in gaining knowledge which can improve the diagnostics and treatment of breast cancer.



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For more information, visit

www.kreftregisteret.no/en

or contact the breast diagnostic center.

The Norwegian Breast Cancer Screening Programme is a collaboration between:

- The Ministry of Health and Care Services
- The Norwegian Directorate of Health
- The Cancer Registry of Norway
- The National Institute of Public Health
- The Norwegian Radiation Protection Authority
- The health regions



Mammography regularly is today the most important method for detecting breast cancer in an early stage.



The Norwegian Breast Cancer Screening Programme – “Mammografiprogrammet”

- invites all women between 50 and 69 years of age to mammography every two years
- is a governmental, nationwide and voluntary health service administrated by the Cancer Registry of Norway
- detects every year about 1000 cases of breast cancer or precancerous lesions
- three in four invited women choose to participate

Mammography does not detect all changes in the breast. If you discover any changes yourself, please contact your doctor.

“Welcome to participate in the Norwegian Breast Cancer Screening Programme!”

Mammography can save lives



Why this invitation?

Breast cancer is the most common cancer among women in Norway. One in ten women will develop breast cancer some time during their life. Eight in ten cases develop in women older than 50.

Mammography screening is an x-ray examination of the breasts in women with no prior symptoms or signs of breast cancer. The objective is to detect breast cancer in an early stage, which often leads to improved survival.

What happens during the mammography examination?

The whole visit takes 10-20 minutes. Before the x-ray examination, a radiographer will ask you a few questions and look for skin changes that may appear on the mammograms. This is information that will be used when the radiologists read the mammograms.

Mammography can be done regardless of the size of the breasts. Two mammograms of each breast will be taken. In order to obtain good technical quality and the lowest possible dose of radiation, the breasts must be pressed

The Norwegian Breast Cancer Screening Programme invites all women between 50 and 69 years of age every two years, because the effect of mammography screening is best documented in this age group. Age at first invitation may vary from 48-53 due to the invitation system, but all women will receive ten invitations in total.

for a few seconds. Some women may find this uncomfortable. Mammography gives a low dose of radiation compared to other x-ray examinations. The dose and the apparatus are controlled regularly by the Norwegian Radiation Protection Authority.

The mammograms are read by two radiologists. Reading and storing of mammograms is done at the breast clinics, which are the specialist centers for breast diagnostics and treatment in your health trust.



How do you get the result?

All participants receive a letter from the Cancer Registry of Norway or the breast clinic; most within 2-3 weeks after the examination.

Some women are called back for additional examinations at the breast clinic. For most women, a recall means taking new x-rays and possibly ultrasound. Sometimes a cell test and/or a further check-up of the tissue is needed. Keep in mind that a recall in most cases does not mean you have breast cancer.

Do you have breast implants? Implants can make it more difficult both to take and read the mammograms.

Therefore, women with breast implants are more likely to be called back for additional examinations.

Have you had breast cancer surgery?

If you have had breast cancer surgery and are included in a follow-up, continue to do so. When the follow-up period is completed (up to ten years), you may participate in the Programme again.

If you suspect a genetic disposition for breast cancer in your family, you can receive guidance at the Department of Medical Genetics in your health region. Consult your doctor.

Are there any disadvantages of participating in the Norwegian Breast Cancer Screening Programme?

- **Overdiagnosis/overtreatment:** Breast cancers grow with varying speed. As of today, it is not possible to predict precisely how or how fast screening detected precancerous lesions or breast cancers will develop. Therefore, breast cancers are sometimes detected and treated without knowing whether they would have developed into a health problem. There are disagreements among the medical and scientific experts as to how big this problem is.
- **Breast cancer between two screening examinations:** Some cases of breast cancer are not detected at mammography, or develop in the time period between two mammography screenings. You should always seek a doctor if you detect a lump or other changes in your breasts.
- **False positive mammography examination:** It can be difficult by mammography alone to differentiate between benign changes and changes which can be precancerous lesions or breast cancer. Additional examinations are therefore sometimes necessary. For most women the changes turn out not to be dangerous, and the examination is therefore called a false positive mammography.
- **Uneasiness and anxiety:** Many women may experience uneasiness and anxiety connected to the mammography examination, both in the waiting time and if recalled for additional examinations. Contact your doctor if you find this very difficult.

The Norwegian Breast Cancer Screening Programme in numbers:

One may expect the following results when 1 000 women are examined:

- 960-970 have normal mammograms
- 30-40 are recalled for additional examinations
- 5-6 are diagnosed with breast cancer or precancerous lesions