

### What is breast cancer screening?

Breast cancer screening is the use of imaging tests, primarily mammograms, to detect breast cancer early, before symptoms appear. It is recommended that women who are 40-74 years of age and are at average-risk for breast cancer receive one every 2 years.

### Why is this screening important?

It allows for early detection which significantly increases the chances of successful treatment and survival. Additionally, fewer aggressive treatment options may be needed.

### Breast Cancer Screening Options

- **Mammogram** - X-ray of the breast that is used to help look for signs of breast cancer. Mammograms are recommended for women of average risk to find breast cancer early and is the **gold standard** for breast cancer screening.
  - 2D Screening Mammogram - consists of taking two pictures of each breast.
  - 3D Screening Mammogram (digital breast tomosynthesis) - consists of taking multiple images from different angles which enables viewing slides of the breast as different depths.
- Clinical Breast Exams (physical examination performed by a provider) and self-exams are not considered breast cancer screenings.

### What to Expect During a Mammogram

1. Removing all clothing and jewelry above the waist. A provider will provide an open-front hospital gown or drape to wear.
2. Stand in front of the mammography machine, and the technologist will ask to remove one breast at a time from the gown and position the breast on a breast support plate.
3. The technologist will lower a plastic paddle to compress the breast against the support plate. There may be some discomfort or pressure.
4. The machine will take images of the breast while it's compressed.
5. This process will be repeated on the other breast, if applicable.
6. Once the technologist is done taking images with the machine, the procedure will be over. Results are typically available within a couple weeks.

The entire process typically takes 10-15 minutes.

### Results and Follow-Up

- **Normal Mammogram:** Means the mammogram did not show any issues or abnormal areas in the breast images.
- **Abnormal Mammogram:** Means the mammogram showed one or more suspicious areas. Follow-up may include:
  - Diagnostic mammogram – more detailed breast x-ray used to investigate suspicious findings identified during a screening mammogram or physical examination.
  - Breast Ultrasound – uses sound waves and their echoes to make computer pictures of the inside of the breast. Ultrasounds are typically not used as a routine screening test but can be used for looking at areas that are not found or are hard to see on a mammogram (i.e. lumps, dense breasts).

- Breast Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) – uses radio waves and strong magnets to make detailed pictures of the inside of the breast. This is often recommended to supplement mammograms for women at high risk (i.e. family history, genetic mutation) or if there are symptoms.
- Biopsy – removal of a small sample of breast tissue for examination under a microscope.
- ❖ If the mammogram is normal or follow-up tests did not reveal the presence of breast cancer, continue screening mammograms at the recommended frequency.
- ❖ If cancer is detected, member will be referred to a provider or breast specialist to discuss next steps in care.

### Where to get a mammogram?

- Radiology centers and imaging centers
- Mammography clinics
- Hospital radiology departments
- Mobile mammography units
- Some doctors' offices

UCare does not require a referral from a PCP for a screening mammogram, however an order is required (often standing orders are in place to allow members to schedule directly with the screening facility).

### Benefit Coverage

Mammogram screenings (both 2D and 3D) are covered by UCare under preventive services which incurs no out of pocket cost. Members should contact UCare for questions about out-of-pocket costs for follow-up. Costs vary by plan.

### UCare Incentives

Mammogram Screening – Incentives vary by plan. For more details, please refer to:

- <https://www.ucare.org/health-wellness/rewards-incentives>