

Do you need breast cancer screening services?

What you should know:

Breast cancer is the second-leading cause of cancer deaths for women in North Carolina. Each year, thousands of North Carolina women are diagnosed with breast cancer and some die from the disease. Women in North Carolina have a 1-in-8 lifetime risk of developing breast cancer.

It is important for women of all races and ethnicities to be screened for breast cancer.

The goal of screening exams for early breast cancer detection is to find cancers before they start to cause symptoms. Annual clinical breast exams and mammograms are important methods of finding breast cancer in its earliest, most treatable stage. Breast self awareness can also be a useful tool for women to find changes in their breasts early. Early detection of breast cancer can save lives.

Don't wait until it's too late – get screened today!

The NC Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program (BCCCP) offers free or low-cost breast cancer screenings and follow-up to eligible women in North Carolina.

Who is eligible for BCCCP?

Women aged 40-64 who meet the following criteria:

- have a household income below 250 percent of the federal poverty level;
- are uninsured or underinsured; and
- are without Medicare Part B or Medicaid.

Women younger than 40 may be eligible to receive services. Contact your local BCCCP provider.

What services are available?

- Clinical breast exams
- Mammograms (if age appropriate)
- Diagnostic procedures, as indicated

What are you waiting for?

To find a local BCCCP provider near you, call **919-707-5300** or visit <https://bcccp.ncdhhs.gov/Eligibility.asp>.

Risk factors for breast cancer

- Gender – simply being female
- Age 50 or older
- Under age 12 at onset of menstrual periods
- Over age 50 at onset of menopause
- Over age 30 when first giving birth
- Never having given birth
- Personal or family history of breast cancer
- Being overweight
- Genetic predisposition, such as certain mutations in BRCA1 or BRCA2 genes

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Symptoms

Early breast cancer sometimes does not cause pain. When breast cancer first develops, there may be no symptoms at all. But as the cancer grows, it can cause changes that women should watch for:

- A lump or thickening in or near the breast or in the underarm area – more than half of such masses are found in the upper outer quarter of the breast.
- A change in the size or shape of the breast.
- An abnormal discharge from the nipple.
- A change in the color, feel, or texture of the skin of the breast, areola, or nipple (dimpled, puckered, or scaly).

What is a mammogram?

A mammogram is an X-ray of the breast. It is used to study normal and abnormal structures within the breasts. A screening mammogram is used to look for breast disease in women who do not have symptoms. A diagnostic mammogram is used to diagnose or rule out breast disease in women who do have breast symptoms.

Tips for Getting a Mammogram

- Wear a two-piece outfit so that you will only have to remove your top for the mammogram.
- Schedule your mammogram when your breasts are not as tender or sensitive (at least two weeks before your next expected period or one week after your last period).
- Do not wear any deodorant, talc or lotion in the breast area or underarms.
- Remove all jewelry from your neck and chest area before the mammogram.
- Try to have your mammogram done at the same facility you have used before. If you are changing the mammography facility, take copies of your previous mammogram results so they can compare the new films.
- Take your health care provider's address and phone number with you so that the mammography center can transfer your results to the facility.

Consult your health care provider to determine when mammography screenings should begin, based on your own health history.

What if my results are abnormal?

If a mammogram detects a suspicious area, you may be advised to have further mammograms or an ultrasound, to see a specialist, or to have a biopsy.

For more information about NC BCCCP, please call 919.707.5300 or visit <https://bcccp.ncdhhs.gov/Eligibility.asp>.

Additional Resources

American Cancer Society

www.cancer.org
800.227.2345 or
TTY 866.228.4327

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

www.cdc.gov/cancer/breast

National Cancer Institute

www.cancer.gov/types/breast
800.422-6237 or
TTY 800.332.8615

National Women's Health Information Center

800.994.9662 or
TDD 888.220.5446

NC Comprehensive Cancer Program

<https://publichealth.nc.gov/chronicdiseaseandinjury/cancerpreventionandcontrol/docs/BreastCancer-Web.pdf>
919.707.5300

Pretty in Pink

www.prettyinpinkfoundation.org
919.532.0532

Susan G. Komen NC Triangle to the Coast

<https://komennc.org>
919.493.2873

