



Where can I get more information?

If you have any questions or concerns, you are welcome to contact a BreastScreen SA Medical Officer by phoning 08 8274 7151. Alternatively, you can speak with your doctor or specialist.

BreastScreen SA

Central Adelaide Local Health Network
Level 1 300 Wakefield Street
Adelaide SA 5000

Book online: www.breastscreen.sa.gov.au

Call us: 13 20 50

Email us: HelloBSSA@sa.gov.au



This document has been reviewed and endorsed by BreastScreen SA's Consumer Group for consumers and the community.

If you do not speak English, request an interpreter from SA Health and the Department will make every effort to provide you with an interpreter in your language.



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Breast cancer screening for women with medical devices



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I have a medical device. Can I come to BreastScreen SA?

Most women with medical devices can have a screening mammogram every 2 years.

When you attend for your breast screen, the radiographer will confirm the position of the medical device to check that it is safe to screen you without risking damage to the device.

We can usually screen women with the following medical devices:

- Pacemaker
- Defibrillator
- Loop recorder or monitor
- Infusaport, port-a-cath or smart port
- Permacath
- PICC line
- Gastric banding port (over breastbone)
- Ventriculoperitoneal (VP) shunt
- Peripheral nerve stimulator

Women with other medical devices may still have access to free breast cancer screening at BreastScreen SA. Please contact us to discuss what is suitable for you. Some women may also need to consult their specialist before a screening appointment can be booked.

Do I need to mention that I have a medical device?

Yes. Please inform our booking staff about your medical device when you make your appointment. We may recommend that you speak with one of our Medical Officers prior to booking.

Is it safe for me to have screening mammograms?

BreastScreen SA can provide safe and effective screening for most women with medical devices.

When you attend for your breast screen, the radiographer will confirm the position of the medical device to check that it is safe to screen you.

For a small number of women, it will not be safe to proceed because of the risk of damaging the device. If this occurs, we will recommend you see your doctor to discuss other options for breast cancer detection.

During your breast screen, we will take extra care and may need to use special positioning techniques to obtain high-quality images.

If we are unable to see all of your breast tissue because of the position of your device, we may recommend you see your doctor to arrange further imaging.

How much radiation will I receive?

Screening mammography uses a very small dose of radiation. Some women with medical devices may require extra images and receive slightly more exposure to radiation. The amount of radiation is still minimal, and the benefits of screening outweigh any concern about additional exposure.

Will having a screening mammogram be painful?

No. You may experience some discomfort, though most women find that this discomfort does not last long. Please tell the radiographer if you feel too uncomfortable.

If you have a gastric banding port over the breastbone, you may experience some additional discomfort due to your port's position and our radiographers will position you carefully to minimise this. There is a very small risk of minor injury or bruising to the skin around the port site and, if this occurs, you will be treated at the clinic and given follow-up care advice.

If we are unable to see all of the breast tissue because of the position of your port, we may recommend additional imaging.

Can breast cancer be detected in women with medical devices?

While regular breast screens are currently the most effective way of screening for breast cancer, a screening mammogram will not detect all breast cancers.

Depending on the type and position of the medical device, some breast tissue may be hidden, making cancers more difficult to identify. If you become aware of a change in your breasts, such as a lump or nipple discharge, you should contact your doctor as soon as possible.

How often should I have a screening mammogram?

BreastScreen SA screens women every 2 years. Some women with a personal or strong family history of breast cancer will be invited for annual screening.

What else should I do?

It is important for you to be aware of the look and feel of your breasts. If you notice a new symptom, such as a lump or nipple discharge, you should contact your doctor as soon as possible.