Five things to know about breast cancer screenings

FROM PREMERA BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD OF ALASKA



Access to affordable care is the cornerstone for a healthy community, and getting your preventive screenings is a critical component of staying healthy. Here are five things you need to know about breast cancer and preventive screenings. They'll help you understand what screenings are, why they're important, and how to get them.

1. **Am I at risk for breast cancer?** Breast cancer can affect anyone with breast tissue. Breast cancer is one of the most common cancers and it is showing up in younger people. Breast exams should be part of your regular screening appointments as early detection can stop it from spreading or becoming more serious. Knowing your family history is the best way to know how often and at what age you should get screenings.

2. **What are signs of breast cancer?** Everyone is different. For some people, they don't have any changes in their breasts or notice any lumps. For others, they may notice changes, such as a hard area, a lump in the breast or underarm, redness, discharge, or changes in the nipples. These are all reasons to check with your primary care provider about testing. If something is found, a **biopsy** is often done to figure out if the tissue is benign (non-cancerous) or malignant (cancerous).

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065359 (04-24-2024)

3 **What is a breast exam?** A breast exam is usually part of your annual wellness visit. Your provider will manually check each breast, under your arms, and around your collar bone. This is to check for any swelling, lumps, or changes. These exams can be done at any age. If you have a family history, or notice changes in your breasts, talk with your provider about having a breast exam. This **Breast Exam** guide takes you through a standard breast exam.

4 **What is a mammogram and when should I start getting them?** A mammogram is an x-ray of the breast. It can show tumors or abnormal areas that are too small for you or your doctor to feel. The US Preventive Services Task Force is recommending getting regular mammograms starting at age 40. For women with higher risk factors, such as a family history of breast cancer, a baseline mammogram may be scheduled at an earlier age. A mammogram may also be scheduled if changes are noted during an exam. Mammograms that are preventive are covered in full. Mammograms that are diagnostic, meaning it was ordered because of a symptom or concern, are covered, but there may be a cost to you.* Learn more about what to expect when you get a mammogram in the **Breast Exam** guide.

5 **Where to and how to get care:**

Breast exams: Your primary care provider is your first stop for an annual wellness exam and breast exam. Find an in-network provider using the Find Care tool on **premera.com**. Sign in and browse by category using the Primary Care tile.

Mammograms: Your provider can recommend where to go for mammograms and other screenings. They are usually done at a hospital or imaging center. To find an imaging center near you, use the Find care tool on **premera.com**. Sign in and type Diagnostic Imaging Center into the search bar. Your employer may also offer mobile mammography vans at your workplace.

If you are diagnosed with breast cancer, Premera is here to support you. Find more information on our Care Essentials page, under **Cancer** or **Women's Health**. Our **Personal Health Support** care team can answer questions about treatment and coverage, plan and coordinate your care, and transfer medical records. Speak with a care manager at 888-742-1479, Monday through Friday, 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Saturday, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Pacific Time.

Want to know about other covered cancer screenings?
Use our 5 Things Guides on **cervical**, **colorectal**, and **general preventive** screenings.

*During your visit, your provider may order tests and lab work that are not covered by your preventive benefits. Discuss all tests with your doctor as you may be required to pay a share of these costs.

Breast Biopsy, **https://www.healthwise.net/pbc/Content/StdDocument.aspx?DOCHWID=aa10755#aa10758**, Healthwise.net

Breast Exam, **https://www.healthwise.net/pbc/Content/StdDocument.aspx?DOCHWID=tv7408#tv7409**, Healthwise.net

Notice of availability and nondiscrimination **800-508-4722 | TTY: 711**

Call for free language assistance services and appropriate auxiliary aids and services.
Tumawag para sa mga libreng serbisyo ng tulong sa wika at angkop na mga karagdagang tulong at serbisyo.
Llame para obtener servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística, y ayudas y servicios auxiliares apropiados.
무료 언어 지원 서비스와 적절한 보조 도구 및 서비스를 신청하십시오.
Hu thov kev pab txhais lus pub dawb thiab lwm yam khoom pab dawb thiab kev pab cuam ua tsim nyog.
Звоните для получения бесплатных услуг по переводу и других вспомогательных средств и услуг.
呼吁提供免费的语言援助服务和适当的辅助设备及服务。
呼籲提供免費的語言援助服務和適當的輔助設備及服務。
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Appelez pour obtenir des services gratuits d’assistance linguistique et des aides et services auxiliaires appropriés.
Ligue para serviços gratuitos de assistência linguística e auxiliares e serviços auxiliares adequados.
Chiama per i servizi di assistenza linguistica gratuiti e per gli ausili e i servizi ausiliari appropriati.
اتصل للحصول على خدمات المساعدة اللغوية المجانية والمساعدات والخدمات المناسبة.
برای خدمات کمک زبانی رایگان و کمک‌ها و خدمات امدادی مقتضی، تماس بگیرید.

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037398 (07-05-2024)

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