

Patient advice sheet

Surveillance Mammography

What is surveillance mammography?

Following your initial treatment for breast cancer, and for some other breast conditions, the clinicians will arrange for mammography to be performed annually. This is called surveillance mammography. Usually this will be for 5 years but will vary according to your age at the time of diagnosis of breast cancer and the type of any other breast problem.

If you are being monitored because you have an increased risk of breast cancer due to your family history you may also have surveillance mammography.

Your results

Results of your mammogram will be sent to you and your GP within three weeks. Sometimes further tests need to be performed to ensure the result is correct. If this is so, we will ask you to attend the Breast Unit at Wycombe Hospital for further tests. Everything will be discussed fully with you during this visit.

When should I have my next mammogram?

Women will be allocated a surveillance programme tailored to their individual needs.

This might mean that you are asked to attend again in one year or another interval dependent on your age and what is clinically appropriate for you.

Breast changes

Although mammography is currently the best method of detecting early breast cancer, it is not 100% accurate – so please do be aware of changes.

If you get to know how your breasts normally look and feel, you will be more likely to spot any changes that could be signs of breast cancer.

Breast changes – what to look for and when to seek further advice

- A lump or thickening in the breast.
- A change in the nipple which might have become 'pulled in' or changed shape.
- Discharge from the nipple, a red scaly nipple or a rash.
- A change in how the breast feels or looks. It may feel heavy or the size or shape of the breast may have changed.
- Any changes to the skin of the breast including red areas or raised spots.
- Pain or discomfort in the breast or armpit.
- A swelling or lump in the armpit.

If you have had surgery to your breast there are some other changes to look for

- A lump or swelling in your breast or skin above your collar bone or in your neck or arm.
- A new pain or any pain that persists for more than 3 weeks and does not improve with pain relief – that could be in any part of your body, especially the back and hips. The pain may be worse at night.
- Lymphoedema – swelling of the arm.
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How to examine your breasts

When feeling for lumps many women like to do this in the bath or shower, using a flat soapy hand. Remember to examine the whole breast and get to know what is normal for you. For more information use the camera on your phone to follow the QR code below.



What do I do if I have any questions?

The Breast Care Nurses will be happy to answer any further questions or concerns. They can be contacted at Wycombe Hospital. Please leave a message and they will return your call.

Breast Care Nurses: 01494 426228

Our telephone lines are open every weekday from 9.00am until 4.30pm

Email: buc-tr.bsu@nhs.net

Please remember that this leaflet is intended as general information only. We aim to make the information as up to date and accurate as possible, but please note that it is subject to change. Please therefore always check specific advice on any concerns you may have with your doctor.

How can I help reduce healthcare associated infections?

Infection prevention & control is important to the well-being of our patients and for that reason we have infection prevention & control procedures in place. Keeping your hands clean is an effective way of preventing the spread of infections. Please follow our infection prevention and control guidelines when visiting our healthcare sites. Further information is available on our website.

Patient Advice Sheet

If you would like a copy of this information on audiotape, in large print or translated, please call the Patient Advice Liaison Service on 01296 831120 or email bht.pals@nhs.net