

BREAST CANCER SCREENING

INFORMATION
ON **ADDITIONAL
EXAMINATIONS**
TO SCREENING
MAMMOGRAPHY

This brochure is intended for women and transgendered or non-binary people who have been recommended to undergo additional examinations following a breast cancer screening mammography, whether or not performed as part of the Québec Breast Cancer Screening Program.

Why are more tests needed after a screening mammogram?

After studying the results of your screening mammogram, the radiologist may recommend that you take additional examinations. This doesn't mean that you have breast cancer.

In fact, when a mammogram shows an abnormality, additional tests are used to establish the exact diagnosis. Among women participating in the Québec Breast Cancer Screening Program, mammography shows an abnormality for:

- 22% first-time participants;
- 9% of other participants.

However, for the vast majority of program participants (nearly 95%), additional examinations reveal no cancer.

Institut national de santé publique du Québec

What additional examinations can be done?

A variety of examinations are used, depending on the specific situation. The testing that you will undergo will be appropriate for your personal case.

It may be any of the following:

- **additional mammograms** to see enlarged images of a part of the breast to clarify the nature of the anomaly.
- **Breast tomosynthesis**: also called three-dimensional mammography (3D), it makes it possible to acquire multiple images of the breast from different angles.
- **Ultrasound examination**: a test to see inside the breast using an ultrasound probe.
- **Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI)**: an exam to see inside of the breast using a magnetic field and radio waves, with or without injection of a contrast liquid.
- **Nonsurgical biopsy** in which a small quantity of cells or tissue is removed using various types of needles.
- **Stereotactic localization**, a procedure involving the computer-guided insertion of a needle in a lesion. This needle serves to guide the very precise surgical removal of tissue from the lesion site.
- **Surgical biopsy** in which the lesion or part of the lesion is removed surgically.

How should you prepare for additional examinations?

If you're like many women, you'll be concerned about the idea of having to undergo more tests for the detection of a potential problem. Remember that in nearly 95% of cases, these additional tests do not find cancer.

Practical advice to help you get ready for further testing

These practical pieces of advice apply to most of the additional examinations, but may differ from exam to exam. Find out about the specific instructions to follow for the additional examinations.

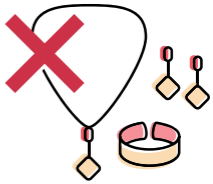
- If necessary, discuss your fears and concerns with a health care professional before your examination.
- If your breasts are sensitive and you're still menstruating, ask to be examined within 10 days of the start of your period, or when your breasts are less sensitive. You can also discuss this with the technologist at the time of the examination.
- Wear a two-piece set as you may have to remove the top (avoid wearing a dress).



- Don't wear any of the following products on the day of your test: deodorant, powder, lotions, or perfume. These products can distort the results of certain exams.



- Before the test, you will have to remove jewelry like necklaces, earrings, or other pieces that could interfere with the test.



- Ask the center about the usual waiting period for the result of this examination.



How to book an appointment?

If your mammogram shows an anomaly:

A new procedure was introduced in 2024 to reduce waiting times. If the radiologist recommends further tests, the Screening Center where you had your mammography will contact you to schedule an appointment. Note that another center, a Reference Center for Investigation, may also contact you, depending on the type of examination recommended. Please note that it is possible that your additional tests will be scheduled before your physician or specialized nurse practitioner has been informed of your results.

It may take about two weeks for the center to contact you to schedule your appointment. If you have not been contacted after this time, contact the Screening Center where you had your mammography.

If your mammogram is normal, but you mentioned having symptoms in your breasts during the examination:

Even if the result of your mammogram is normal, we recommend that you consult your physician or specialized nurse practitioner as soon as possible to assess whether you need further tests.

If you are participating in the Québec Breast Cancer Screening Program and do not have a family doctor or specialized nurse practitioner, a health care professional will follow up on your symptoms.

When and how will you receive your results?

As soon as your results are available, you'll receive them from a doctor, a specialized nurse practitioner or the center where the tests were performed.

For more information on results of mammograms or additional examinations—or any other breast health questions that concern you—talk with a doctor or a specialized nurse practitioner.



To learn more about breast cancer screening, visit:
Québec.ca/depistage-cancer-du-sein.

If you have any questions about the Québec Breast Cancer Screening Program, please contact the Regional Service Coordination Center in your area.

To find out how to contact the Regional Service Coordination Center, Screening Centers and Reference Centers for Investigation in your area, visit the Regional Resources section of the Gouvernement du Québec website at:
Québec.ca/depistage-cancer-du-sein or contact **Services Québec**:

Québec City area: **418-644-4545**

Greater Montréal area: **514-644-4545**

Elsewhere in Québec: **1 877-644-4545** (toll free)

Persons with a hearing or speech impairment (TTY):
1-800-361-9596 (toll free)