

Breast Screening Fact Sheet

What is a Clinical Breast Exam (CBE)?

A CBE is done as part of your annual health exam. A health care provider will do a CBE each year before your mammogram. They will examine your breast by feeling for lumps or changes in the breast.

What is a Mammogram?

A mammogram is an X-ray of the breast that can find tumors that are too small to detect by touch. Regular mammograms can find cancer when it is the size of a small seed. A breast lump needs to be about the size of a cherry before a woman can feel it herself. The mammogram technician will take two or three views or pictures of each breast. This test takes about 10 to 15 minutes.

How to Prepare for a Mammogram

It's best to schedule your mammogram and CBE a week after your period starts. This is the time when your breasts are less tender. Do not use deodorant or powder before you have a mammogram.

Day of the Mammogram

If you had a mammogram in the past that was difficult or painful, let the technician know. You will undress from the waist up and put on a robe. You will stand in front of the machine and the technician will carefully position your breast between two plates that will press down to flatten your breast. This may or may not be uncomfortable. If you experience a lot of pain during the mammogram, tell the technician to stop so that they can make it more comfortable.

The dose of radiation you get from a mammogram is about the same as what you get from a dental x-ray or from going through airport security.

You might be called back for more pictures. This does not mean you have breast cancer.

After the Mammogram

You will receive a letter with the results of your mammogram. Your health care provider will also receive a copy of the results. If you don't receive a letter within two weeks, call the mammogram office.

If a lump is found, you will need to have more tests. Two tests that may be done are an ultrasound and a biopsy. About four out of five lumps found are NOT cancer.

Have a mammogram every one to two years after age 40 and every year after age 50. The risk for breast cancer increases with age.

A breast lump needs to be the size of a cherry before a woman can feel it herself.



A mammogram can find cancer when it's the size of a small seed.



**Breast, Cervical & Colon
Health Program**

Saving Lives Through Early Detection

Pap Test and Pelvic Exam Fact Sheet

What is a Pelvic Exam?

In a pelvic exam, the health care provider checks the pelvic area including the uterus, vagina, cervix and ovaries for any abnormalities. Have a pelvic exam every year, even if you don't have a Pap test.

What is a Pap test?

The Pap test finds changes in the cervix which can be treated before they become cancer. A Pap test is a simple test done by a health care provider in a clinic. The provider will take a sample of cells from your cervix to test for any changes. Have a Pap test every one to three years. Ask a health care provider how often you need a Pap test.

How to Prepare for the Pap test

Schedule your Pap test when you are NOT having your period. To help make sure that your test is as accurate as possible, DO NOT douche, have vaginal intercourse, use a tampon or put anything in your vagina for 48 hours before your Pap test.

Day of the Pap test

Empty your bladder before the test. First, you will lie on the examination table. A sheet will cover your legs and stomach. You will lie back putting your feet in holders called stirrups to position your body for the exam. A health care provider will use a speculum to gently open your vagina, and then take a small sample of cells from the cervix. This should not hurt. Tell your provider if you feel pain. It is important to relax the muscles of your belly and breathe normally. You may feel a slight pinch or pressure. You may bleed a little after the test. The sample is put on a glass slide or in a tube of liquid and is sent to a laboratory for examination. The test only takes a few minutes.

After the Pap test

You will receive a letter with the results of your test. If the test is abnormal – other tests may be needed. One test is the colposcopy.

During a colposcopy the doctor examines the abnormal area with a magnifying tool and may take a sample of cells (biopsy). It is important that you complete these tests. In most cases the problem is not cancer.



Artwork courtesy of Terese Winslow, National Cancer Institute

A pap test may find changes in the cervix which can be treated before they become cancer.



A health care provider does a pelvic exam which may include a pap test.

More Information

Cancer Information Service: 1-800-4-cancer (1-800-422-6237)

American Cancer Society: 1-800-ACS-2345, www.cancer.org

Centers for Disease Control: www.cdc.gov

Your Doctor's Office: _____



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