

# Breast Screening for Women with Breast Implants

It saves lives

It's free

Every 2 years

**BreastScreen ACT**



**13 20 50**

Belconnen | Phillip | City

There is no evidence showing people who have breast implants are more likely to develop breast cancer.

A mammogram is the best way of finding breast cancer. Like many other medical tests it is not 100% accurate and it does not detect all cancers. Breast implants can hide some of the breast tissue.

It is important you know how your breasts normally look and feel. If at any time you notice an unusual change, such as a lump or pain, please see your GP without delay.

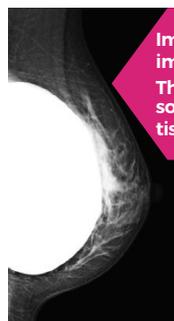


Image shows the implant in place. The implant covers some of your breast tissue.



Image shows the implant pushed back allowing your breast tissue to be more clearly seen.

## Accessibility

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If English is not your first language and you need the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS), please call 13 14 50.

For further accessibility information, visit:  
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A program of



**BreastScreen**  
**AUSTRALIA**

A joint Australian, State and Territory Government Program

## Can I have a breast screen if I have implants?

Yes, if you have breast implants you can have regular breast screens (mammograms). If you have any concerns or are unsure about screening talk to your GP or the radiographer (the person who takes the mammogram).

It is important you tell us you have implants when making your appointment. You will be given a longer appointment to allow for additional x-rays.

When having more x-rays, you will be exposed to slightly more radiation than for a routine mammogram, but this is still well within safety limits.

Your mammogram will be carried out by a female radiographer who has training in screening women with implants.

## Is it safe for me to have regular breast screens?

Having a mammogram is highly unlikely to damage your implants<sup>1</sup>.

Breast screening is generally safe for women with implants, however it is important that you are aware of some of the risks outlined below when making a decision to have a mammogram.

There is an extremely small chance that the pressure placed on the implant by the mammography machine may cause the implants to rupture or break.

Where implants have already ruptured or started to leak, it is possible that having a mammogram could increase the amount of silicone or saline (depending on the type of implant) spreading into the breast tissue.

Sometimes very small amounts of silicone or saline (depending on the implant) pass through the pores of the implant shell. This is sometimes called 'bleeding' of the implant. It is not clear whether mammography increases 'bleeding' of implants.

There is a small chance that mammography will change the shape of the breasts by spreading the fibrous capsule that often grows around the implant. The breast may feel softer after mammography. It cannot be guaranteed that both breasts will be affected equally.

## Will I be told if there is a problem with my implants?

BreastScreen Australia screening programs do not provide a diagnostic service for suspected implant problems, and identifying and reporting implant problems is not the role of BreastScreen ACT.

If you suspect that you may have a problem with your implants, it is recommended you see your GP to have the problem properly assessed. Your GP may refer you to a private diagnostic service for investigation.

BreastScreen ACT respects privacy. It is your choice to have a screening mammogram. In making this decision you may wish to discuss your circumstances with your GP.

**Early breast cancer detection means an increased chance of successful treatment.**

## When will I get my results?

Results are mailed within 14 days. You may be called back for more tests because the mammogram (x-ray) shows changes in your breast/s. Please remember, most changes are not cancer. If you need to come back to the clinic we will contact you by telephone.

<sup>1</sup> Breast Cancer Institute ([www.bci.org.au/breastscreen/about-mammograms.html](http://www.bci.org.au/breastscreen/about-mammograms.html) Accessed 21/4/2016).