



Live Well, Work Well

Health and wellness tips for your work, home and life—brought to you by the insurance professionals at The Reschini Group

According to the American Cancer Society, mammograms can often detect breast cancer years before a woman can find a lump herself.

WOMEN'S HEALTH: MAMMOGRAMS

Mammography is the best available method to detect breast cancer in its earliest stage, which is approximately 1 to 3 years before a woman can feel a lump.

Get the Facts

Mammography is a specific type of imaging that uses a low-dose X-ray system for examination of the breasts. It allows a radiologist to identify differences between a normal breast and one that may show signs of cancer.

What to Expect

During a mammogram, you can expect the following:

- You will be required to undress above the waist. The facility will provide a wrap for you to wear.
- A technologist will be present to position your breasts for the mammogram. You and the technologist will be the only persons present during the mammogram. Most technologists are women.
- The entire procedure takes about 20 minutes. The actual breast compression only lasts a few seconds.
- You may feel some discomfort when your breasts are compressed, but you should not feel pain.

When to Get One

Women in their 20s and 30s should have a clinical breast examination as part of a periodic health exam by a medical professional every three years. After age 40, women should have a breast exam by a health professional every year. The U.S. Preventative Services Task Force recommends that women ages 50 to 74 should get a mammogram every two years.

The risk of getting breast cancer increases with age, so as long as a woman is in good health, she should continue getting routine mammograms. Young women at high risk for breast cancer should discuss with their doctors if earlier screenings are necessary.

Questions to Ask

The following are suggestions for ensuring you will receive a quality mammogram:

- Ask to see the FDA certificate issued to all facilities that meet high professional standards of safety and quality.
- Use a facility that either specializes in mammography or performs mammograms often.
- Bring a list of the places, dates of mammograms, biopsies, or other breast treatments you may have had before.

