

This is an invitation letter for breast cancer screening. More information: www.breastscreening.fi

Firstname Lastname
Address

Screening unit
Date



INVITATION TO BREAST CANCER SCREENING

TIME: date, time
PLACE: name of the screening unit, street address, locality

THE SCREENING APPOINTMENT IS FREE OF CHARGE TO YOU.



WHAT IS IT ALL ABOUT?

This year you have the opportunity to participate in the breast cancer screening offered to you by your home municipality. All women between 50 and 69 years of age are invited for screening every two years.

The aim of the screening is to detect breast cancer early so that the treatment results and the prognosis of the cancer would be better.



WHAT HAPPENS DURING A SCREENING APPOINTMENT?

In the screening, the bare breasts are compressed against the imaging plate of the mammography unit and images are taken in two directions. Before the imaging, you are asked questions about changes in the breasts, breast surgeries (including breast implants), and the use of hormone replacement therapy.



HOW ARE THE RESULTS GIVEN?

You will receive the result by post within about a month of the imaging. If the images reveal anything abnormal, you will be invited to a follow-up examination by letter or telephone.

CHANGE OF TIME

phone number
phone time
www address
email address

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Welcome to the screening! Additional information: www.breastscreening.fi

WHAT AND WHY?

Breast cancer is the most common cancer among women. In Finland, about 5,000 women are diagnosed with breast cancer each year. Screening helps to detect breast cancer at an early stage, before there are any symptoms. The aim of screening is to reduce deaths caused by breast cancer.

PROS AND CONS

Breast cancer mortality among women who have participated in screening is about one-third lower than it would be without screening. In addition, at an early stage it is often possible to use lighter methods for treating cancerous growth.

Screening does not reveal all cases of breast cancer: some are detected between screenings. On the other hand, a small percentage of the tumours found by screening would never develop into cancers requiring treatment. They would not be discovered without screening and they would not do any harm during the woman's lifetime. In addition, one out of six women taking part in screenings regularly is unnecessarily referred to a follow-up examination at least once.

HOW?

Mammography does not require any specific preparations. In the screening, each bare breast in turn is compressed against the imaging plate, which may feel painful for a moment. The screening time can be changed if the breasts are sensitive at a particular stage of the menstrual cycle.

It is best to dress so that the top of the garment can be removed easily. Take the screening invitation and an ID card with you. During the appointment, the radiographer asks about any changes and procedures affecting the breasts, including breast implants, and about hormone replacement therapy.

RESULT?

Each woman who has participated in breast cancer screening receives an answer by letter at home. In most cases, the result is normal; in other words, nothing indicative of breast cancer was found. About three out of a hundred participants are invited to a follow-up examination. Follow-up examinations may include additional mammograms, ultrasound imaging and needle biopsies. An invitation to a follow-up examination does not mean cancer – four out of five people referred for follow-up examinations are not diagnosed with breast cancer. About one out of five people referred for follow-up examinations receive a referral to surgery.

RECOGNISE THE SYMPTOMS

Palpation of the breast and armpit area for changes may help in detecting breast cancer. If you yourself detect, or someone else notices, a change (e.g. a lump, ulceration, rash on the areola, nipple discharge), you should consult a doctor. Always do this when you notice a symptom, even if you had just been or were about to go for screening soon. However, it is good to remember that only a fraction of the symptoms are caused by breast cancer.