
Screening for the prevention of breast cancer

According to the data reported in the report Cancer numbers in Italy 2020 by the Italian Association of Cancer Registries (AIRTUM) and the Italian Association of Medical Oncology (AIOM), breast cancer remains the **most frequent neoplasm in Italy**, among others.

It has been shown that screening programs reduce specific mortality from breast cancer in the population that carries out periodic check-ups regularly. Screening allows early diagnosis of tumors and cases of disease diagnosed at an advanced stage can be reduced. As a result, women's quality of life can be improved by favoring conservative therapies that are less burdensome for women.

How the test is performed

For this screening, a mammogram is performed, a radiological examination that is performed at one of the radiological services of the accredited public or private hospitals affiliated with ATS for screening activities. It is carried out by radiology technicians using dedicated instrumentation (the mammograph) and takes a few minutes. Mammography is the most effective test currently available for the early detection of breast cancer, even when there are no symptoms or the tumor is not palpable.

What is the advantage of having a mammogram by adhering to the screening program

The peculiarity of the screening programs consists in the double reading: each mammogram is evaluated separately by two separate radiologists with extensive and consolidated experience in breast radiology.

The whole process is free and coordinated by the ATS screening service.

When to do it

It is offered to women aged 50 to 74 every 2 years and to women aged 45 to 49 every year.

How to join

Women, aged 45-74 years, receive a letter of invitation to have a screening mammogram, according to a reservation indicating place, date and time. If you are unable to attend the appointment, you can call the number indicated to change the appointment, or you can use the special QR Code.

If the test is negative

The examination is negative when both radiologists do not find any alterations and in this case you receive a letter of result at your home; then you are reinvited after one year if you are between 45 and 49 years old, or every 2 years if you are between 50 and 74 years old.

If the test is suspicious or doubtful

If even one of the two radiologists believes there are doubts, you receive a phone call from the screening service with the proposal of an appointment, usually within a week, to perform a completion of the mammogram in order to clarify any doubts: the radiologist evaluates, in each individual situation, which tests are appropriate to perform, including different mammography projections, breast ultrasound, fine needle aspiration for cell examination and biopsy.

The process of deepening the diagnosis can end with a reassuring result for the woman and a booster after two years. Otherwise, if the initial suspicion is confirmed, i.e. the presence of a tumor, the radiologist arranges access to the visit and surgical consultation to continue the therapeutic path of diagnosis and treatment.

When it is not recommended to perform mammography

Screening mammography is not indicated in women who have already undergone surgery for breast cancer and are undergoing periodic oncological check-ups, or if the woman has performed it independently in the last year.

What should I do if I don't receive the invitation

If you do not receive our invitation letter, you can contact us at the TOLL-FREE NUMBER



active from Monday to Friday from 8.30 to 12.30 or send an email to: screening@ats-bg.it.

For more information, consult the website of the [Italian Mammography Screening Group](#).

