

The facts of breast density

BreastScreen Victoria is now reporting breast density.

What is breast density?

Breasts are made up of a mix of fatty and fibroglandular tissue.

Dense breasts have:

- Lower levels of fatty tissue and
- Higher levels of fibroglandular tissue

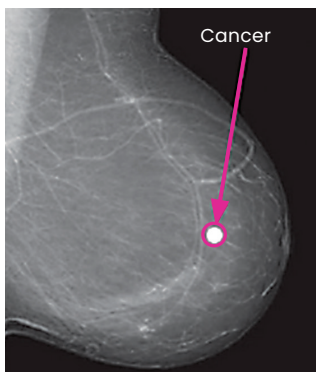
Half of all women have dense breasts.

Some breast cancers can be harder to see on a mammogram if there is a high level of breast density. This is because fibroglandular tissue and cancers both appear white on a mammogram.

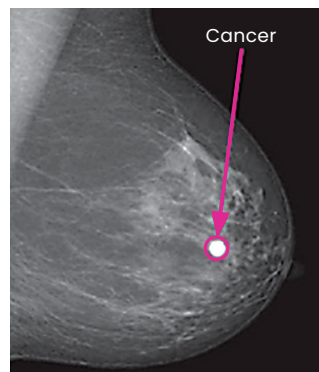
High breast density can also increase the risk of developing cancer. Breast density is only one of many things that can influence the risk of developing breast cancer.

You can't tell how dense a breast is by how it looks, feels or its size. Breast density can only be measured in a mammogram.

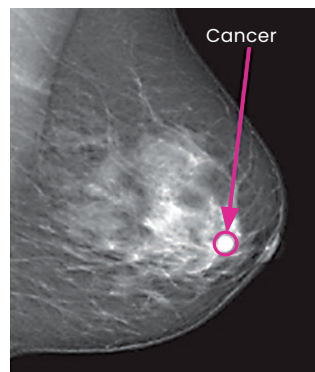
There are four breast density categories:



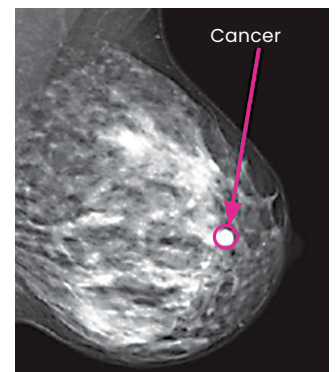
Category A
Almost all fatty tissue



Category B
Mostly fatty tissue



Category C
Some fatty tissue



Category D
Hardly any fatty tissue

Not dense

Dense

Extremely dense

What should I do about breast density?

Mammograms detect most breast cancers in people with dense breasts, however, if you have extremely dense breasts and other risk factors for breast cancer you may wish to discuss further tests with a doctor.

This may include:

- MRI
- 3D mammogram
- Ultrasound, or
- Mammogram with contrast

Other risk factors for breast cancer include family history, gene mutations, or a previous diagnosis of breast cancer or a benign breast disease.

To learn more about these and other risk factors visit breastscreen.org.au/breast-cancer-and-screening/your-breast-cancer-risk



Risk assessment

If you have Category D breast density (extremely dense breasts), we recommend you see a doctor for a risk assessment.

There are multiple risk assessment tools available and they all take some time to complete. If you would like to complete one, you can do so prior to discussion with your doctor by entering details into iPrevent: www.petermac.org/iprevent

We recommend if you have:

- **Category A breast density:** continue to have regular mammograms
- **Category B breast density:** continue to have regular mammograms
- **Category C breast density:** continue to have regular mammograms, and if you have any questions or concerns, discuss with a doctor
- **Category D breast density:** continue to have regular mammograms, and see a doctor for a risk assessment

Further information

BreastScreen Victoria breast density web page: breastscreen.org.au/breastdensity

If you have any questions about breast density you can call BreastScreen Victoria on [8843 0029](tel:88430029).



Book at
breastscreen.org.au
or call **13 20 50**

TTY **13 36 77** if you have hearing or speech difficulties



For more information or to change your details, visit **breastscreen.org.au** or call **13 20 50**



For interpreter assistance, call **13 14 50**



Translated information:
breastscreen.org.au/translations



BreastScreen Victoria acknowledges the support of the Victorian Government.