

What Women Should Know About Mammograms

(NAPSA)—Mammograms are X-ray images of breast tissue that help detect breast cancer in its earliest, most treatable stages. Women aged 40 and over should undergo mammograms annually to screen for signs of breast disease. Those at greater risk may need to have their first mammograms at an earlier age.



A mammogram takes about 20 minutes to complete. Women are asked to undress from the waist up so an X-ray machine can compress each breast for a few seconds while an image is taken. This compression may be uncomfortable, but should not be painful.

Mammography facilities are required to report results within 30 days. Although about 10 percent of women receiving mammograms are called in for additional images, the vast majority will not have cancer.

Early detection of breast cancer saves lives. Although breast cancer remains the second leading cause of cancer death for women in the United States, increased breast cancer screening has recently caused death rates to decline. To learn more about mammography and other early detection practices, such as monthly breast self-exams, visit www.preventcancer.org.