The Little Pink Book
A brief guide to breast health
Be breast aware

Breasts come in all shapes and sizes and will change throughout your life. Your menstrual cycle, pregnancy, age and weight may alter the size, shape and feel of your breasts.

Being aware of the changes and knowing how your breasts feel at different times will help you to understand what is normal for you. If you are familiar with your breasts you may be more likely to notice any unusual changes that could be a sign of breast cancer.
Breast pain

Many women will experience breast pain during their lives.

Breast pain is rarely a symptom of breast cancer.

Common causes of breast pain include hormonal changes, weight gain, bra problems and infections.

If you have breast pain that lasts a long time, or keeps coming back, it is advisable to talk to your GP/family doctor.
What changes should I look for?

Most breast changes are NOT breast cancer. Get to know your breasts and what is normal for you. You should see your GP/family doctor promptly about the following important changes:

- A lump, lumpiness or thickening in the breast or armpit.
- Changes in the skin of the breast such as dimpling, puckering or redness.
- Changes in the nipple such as inversion, new nipple discharge, itchy or ulcerated skin.
- An area of the breast that feels different from the rest.
- New persistent breast pain.
Look in the mirror at your breasts and feel your breasts from time to time.
What is a screening mammogram?

A screening mammogram is a low dose X-ray of a woman's breasts. Screening mammograms are performed on women with no breast symptoms, for the purpose of detecting breast cancer at an early stage.
Who should have a screening mammogram?

BreastScreen WA provides FREE screening mammograms to women 40 years or over with no breast symptoms, and specifically targets women aged 50 to 74 years.

BreastScreen WA encourages women aged 50 to 74 years to have a FREE screening mammogram every two years.

The benefit from having a screening mammogram every two years is greatest for women in this age group. Over 75% of breast cancers occur in women over 50 years of age.

**Once you turn 75** you will no longer be sent a letter reminding you to attend for your two-yearly mammogram. However, you are welcome to phone BreastScreen WA on 13 20 50 for a free appointment.
What if I am a woman under 40 years?

Woman under 40 years are not eligible to attend a screening mammogram at BreastScreen WA. Young women under 40 years have much denser breast tissue than older women, so it is more difficult for screening mammograms to show the changes that may indicate cancer.

Family history of breast cancer

Most breast cancer occurs by chance alone and is not caused by genetic factors. Between 1-5% of all breast cancers are inherited. About 9 out of every 10 women who develop breast cancer do not have any family history of breast cancer.

If you are concerned about your family history of breast cancer, you should discuss your individual circumstances
with your family doctor. If there are any new cases of breast cancer diagnosed in your family, please inform both BreastScreen WA and your family doctor.

**Women with implants**

Women with implants are able to attend the screening mammogram program if they wish. It is important that BreastScreen WA knows if you have implants as special X-ray techniques will be used, more X-rays will be taken and extra time will be needed.

Please tell the call centre person when making an appointment and also advise the screening centre staff when you arrive for your screening appointment.
Without compression your X-ray would appear blurred.

With compression your X-ray will be much clearer.
How is a screening mammogram performed?

A specially trained female radiographer will take your mammogram. To obtain a clear picture and to minimise the radiation dose, the breast is positioned and compressed between two flat plates. This may be uncomfortable, but the compression lasts only a few seconds. Usually two X-rays are taken of each breast, one from the side and one from the top. The whole appointment takes about 20 minutes.

Screening mammograms and radiation

The risk of getting cancer from a screening mammogram is considered to be very low. The benefit of early diagnosis and treatment of breast cancer far outweighs the risk of the small amount of radiation received during a screening mammogram.
How do I book a FREE screening mammogram appointment?

Online bookings are available for standard appointments at metropolitan clinics

www.breastscreen.health.wa.gov.au

Alternatively phone: **13 20 50** (for the cost of a local call)
TTY 1800 241 708

Wheelchair access is available at all BreastScreen WA services.

If you need a free interpreter, please call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) first on 13 14 50, and ask to be connected to the BreastScreen WA call centre on 13 20 50.
Group bookings

Group bookings are available for those women who would prefer to attend as a group. For example, a group of women who speak a language other than English, women in clubs or associations or friends may find it more comfortable to book as a group.

For further enquiries about group bookings please phone 13 20 50.
Where can I have a FREE screening mammogram?

BreastScreen WA has nine metropolitan screening services located at Cannington, Cockburn, David Jones Rose Clinic (Perth city store), Joondalup, Midland, Mirrabooka, Padbury, Perth city and Rockingham, and one permanent screening and assessment service in Bunbury (maps included).

There are also four mobile BreastScreen WA services which visit country towns every two years.
Any questions?

The staff at BreastScreen WA are happy to answer your questions. Please phone (08) 9323 6700 or if you live in the country phone toll-free 1800 800 033.

The TTY number is 1800 241 708.

Alternatively visit the BreastScreen WA website at www.breastscreen.health.wa.gov.au
Cannington Suite 1, Shop 15A, Primewest Cannington, 1490 Albany Highway
Cockburn Cockburn Integrated Health and Community Facility, 11 Wentworth Parade, Success
David Jones Rose Clinic
Level 3, Perth City store
Joondalup
Reid Promenade
(east of Grand Boulevard) next to La Vita Cafe
Midland Shop 14/27 Old Great Northern Highway
Padbury  Hepburn Heights Shopping Centre
Unit 8/6 Blackwattle Parade
Rockingham Unit 2, 12 Leghorn Street
Remember

- It is important women 50 years or over, have a FREE screening mammogram every 2 years.
- Screening mammograms can detect up to 90% of breast cancers.
- Women in Australia have a 1 in 8 risk of developing breast cancer in their lifetime.
- The most important risk factors for developing breast cancer are being a woman and getting older.
- About 9 out of every 10 women who develop breast cancer do not have any family history of breast cancer.
- Be breast aware. Get to know your breasts and what is normal for you.
- See your GP if you notice any unusual changes in your breasts, even if your last mammogram was normal.
- The choice to have a screening mammogram is yours.
# Mammogram and Pap smear diary

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Mark mammograms with ○  Mark Pap smears with X
When did you last have a FREE screening mammogram?
Once is not enough.

It is important for women 50 years or over to have a FREE screening mammogram every two years.

To make an appointment phone 13 20 50 or book online at www.breastscreen.health.wa.gov.au