



Government of Western Australia
North Metropolitan Health Service



The Little Pink Book

A brief guide to breast health



**To make a FREE screening
mammogram appointment book
online at**

www.breastscreen.health.wa.gov.au

Or phone 13 20 50

Please bring your Medicare card

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.

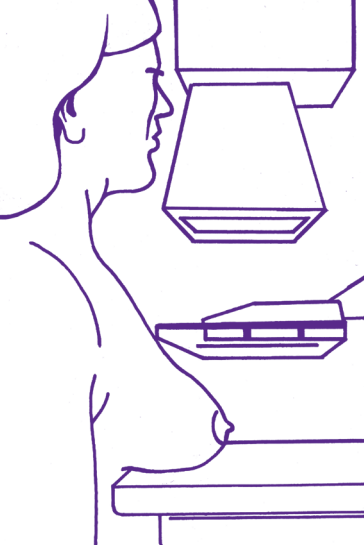
What changes should I look for?

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.

Family history of breast cancer

Most breast cancer occurs by chance alone and only 1-5% of cancers are caused by genetic factors.

Approximately 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 GP/family doctor.

If there are any new cases of breast cancer diagnosed in your immediate family, please inform BreastScreen WA when you attend for your mammogram.

What if I am a woman under 40 years?

Women under 40 years are not eligible to attend a screening mammogram at BreastScreen WA. Less than 6% of all breast cancers occur in women less than 40. 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.

Women with implants

Women with implants are able to attend the screening mammogram program. 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 inform BreastScreen WA when making an appointment and also advise the screening centre staff when you arrive for your appointment.

Dense breasts

Breast density describes how breasts look on a mammogram **NOT** how they feel on examination.

Dense breasts are common and normal, occurring in about one third of women over 50 years.

Research shows higher breast density is associated with a moderately increased risk of breast cancer.

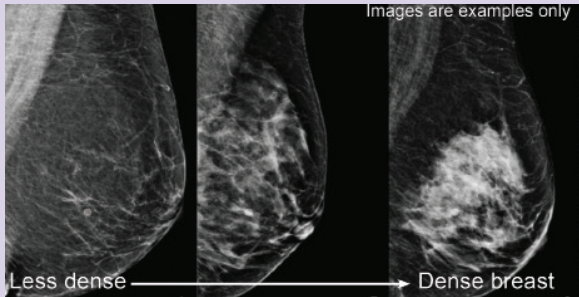
Breast density can hide breast cancers that also appear white on a mammogram.

BreastScreen WA informs women if their breasts are dense.

It is recommended that women who receive a dense breast notification with their results letter see their GP/family doctor for a breast examination and advice.

Spot the dot....

The dot represents breast cancer



The greater the density, the more white areas on the breast X-ray, and the less obvious the dot.

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 less than 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 most appointments

www.breastscreen.health.wa.gov.au

Alternatively phone: **13 20 50**



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 BreastScreen WA's 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, Aboriginal women, 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.

BreastScreen WA provides FREE talks about breast cancer and breast awareness to groups of women in the workplace and community.

Topics include:

- Breast cancer
- Breast cancer risk factors
- Breast cancer screening
- Being breast aware

To book a presentation please phone 9323 6707 or email breastscreenwa@health.wa.gov.au

Where can I have a FREE screening mammogram?

BreastScreen WA has 12 permanent clinics - see following pages for maps.

There are also four mobile clinics which visit country towns every two years. Some towns are visited annually. Please see www.breastscreen.health.wa.gov.au/Breast-screening/Rural-and-remote-women to find the approximate visit date for your town.

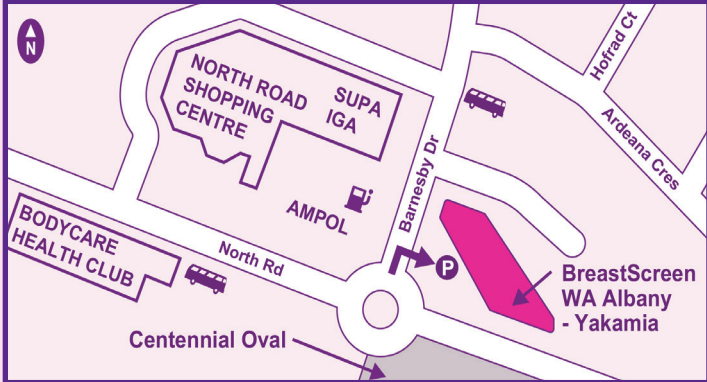
Any questions?

The staff at BreastScreen WA are happy to answer your questions. Please phone (08) 9323 6700 or 13 20 50.

Or visit the BreastScreen WA website at

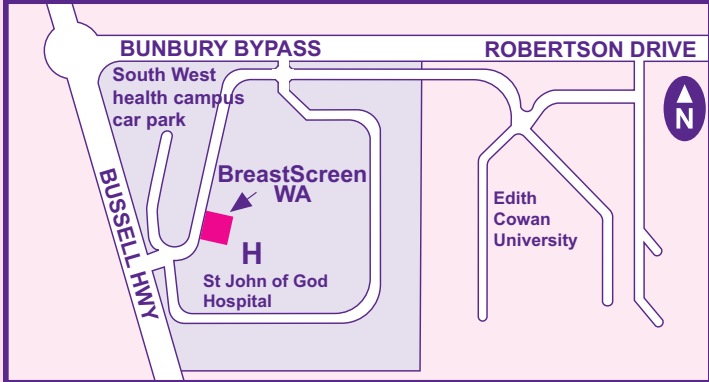
www.breastscreen.health.wa.gov.au

Albany Cnr North Rd and Barnesby Dr

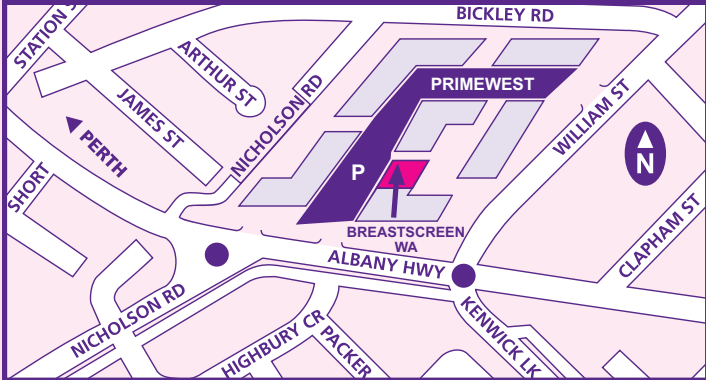


Bunbury South West Health Campus

Corner of Bussell Highway and Robertson Drive

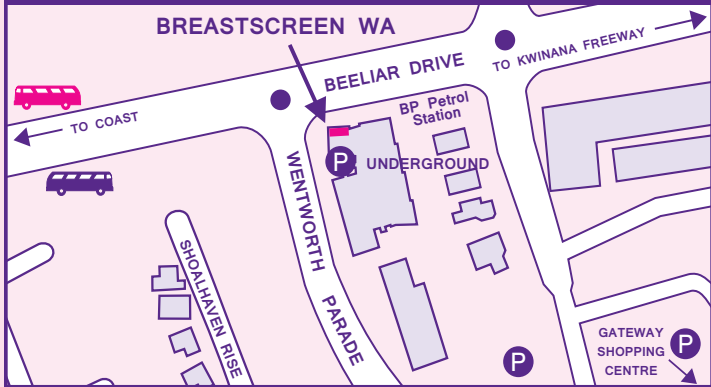


Cannington Suite 1, Shop 15A, Primewest Cannington, 1490 Albany Highway



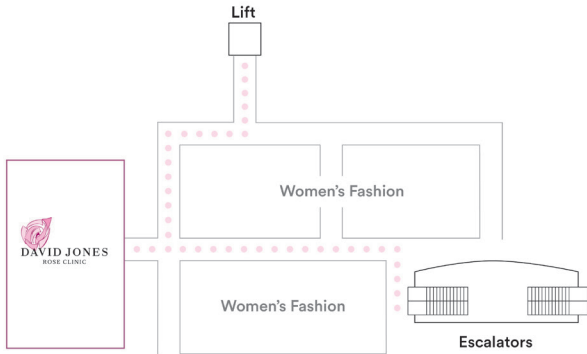
Cockburn

Cockburn Integrated Health & Community
Facility, Suite 4, Cnr Beeliar Dr & Wentworth Pde, Success



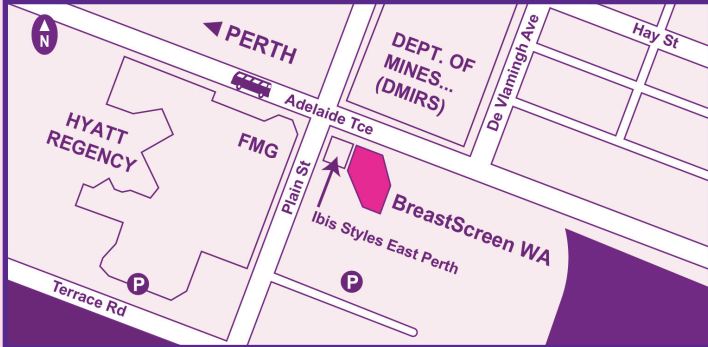
David Jones Rose Clinic

Level 3, Perth City store

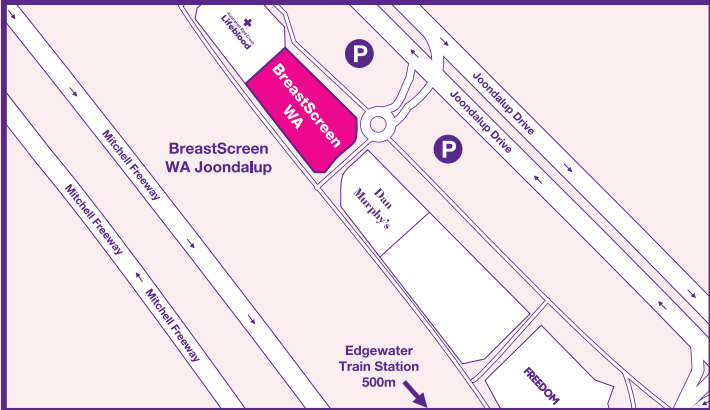


East Perth - Mardalup

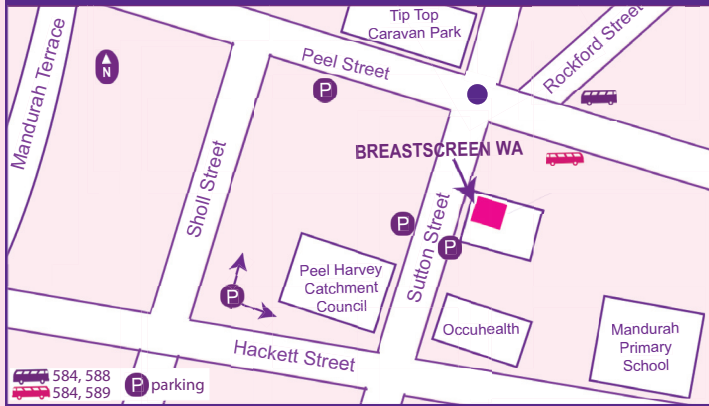
Ground Floor, 63 Adelaide Terrace



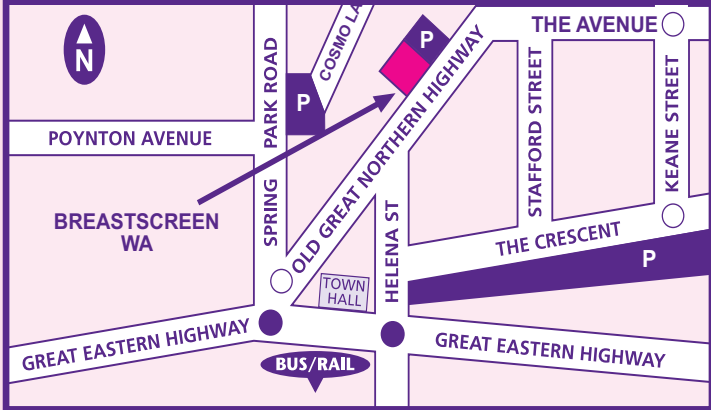
Joondalup 57 Joondalup Drive, Joondalup



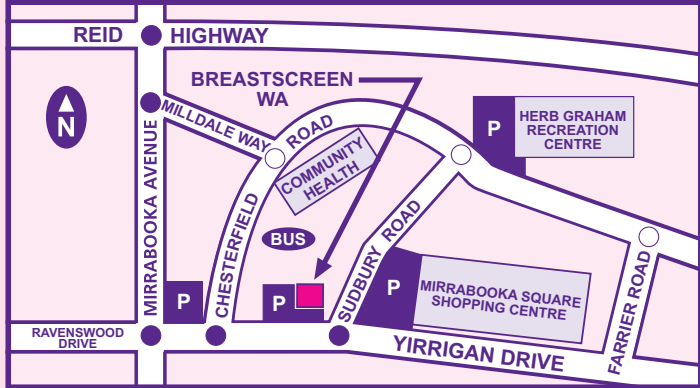
Mandurah L1, 3/61 Sutton Street



Midland Shop 14/27 Old Great Northern Hwy

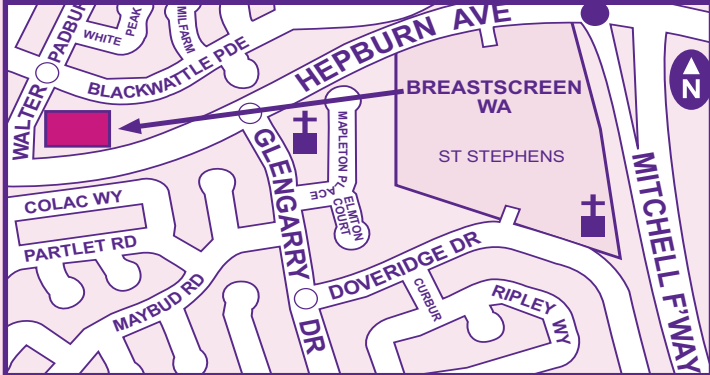


Mirrabooka 29 Yirrigan Drive

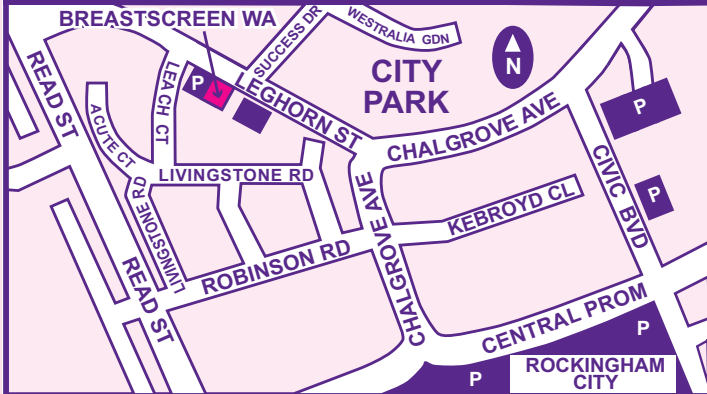


Padbury Hepburn Heights Shopping Centre

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 70-90% of breast cancers.
- Women in Australia have a 1 in 7 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.
- Please bring your Medicare card to your appointment.

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**



BreastScreen
AUSTRALIA

A joint Australian, State and Territory Government Program

