

## What about future breast screening for me?

Your doctor/s will now be responsible for your future care.

As you have been diagnosed with breast cancer your future mammograms should be a part of a more comprehensive check-up by your specialist. For this reason, BreastScreen Tasmania will no longer invite you for regular screening mammograms.

## Other resources

This information package has many helpful resources and contacts.

Please take the time to have a look.

Links to further resources may be found at these sites.

National Breast Cancer Centre

- <http://www.breasthealth.com.au>  
freecall 1800 624 973

Breast Cancer Network Australia

- <http://www.bcna.org.au>  
freecall 1800 500 258

Or call The Cancer Council - Tasmania Helpline:

Telephone: 13 11 20



# After your diagnosis of **BREAST CANCER**

- What happens next?
- Our recommendations
- Making treatment decisions
- Emotional survival
- Resources



## What happens next?

- You will see your GP who will refer you to a specialist and you may visit a specialist breast surgeon and/or an oncologist.

## We recommend you:

- Take your x-rays and results letter to your GP who will help you choose a specialist.
- Ask your GP for a copy of your BreastScreen results letter for your records.
- Take your x-rays and the second copy of your results letter to the specialist.
- It may be helpful to take a support person with you to your doctor's visits.
- You may need your x-rays for later treatment so it would be beneficial to keep them after your surgery. You could ask for them when you see the surgeon for your follow up visit after your surgery.

## Making decisions about your treatment

- The surgeon at BreastScreen may have discussed some treatment options that may be available for you. These options are best discussed again with your GP or specialist breast surgeon.
- It is important you have enough information and are confident that you understand what is happening so you can be involved in making decisions about your treatment.
- Everyone's situation is different and it is important you discuss your particular situation with your doctor.
- It is a good idea to take a list of questions with you to your doctor's appointment.
- The enclosed National Breast Cancer Centre booklet provides information about early breast cancer and includes some questions you may wish to ask your doctor.
- We encourage you to take time to discuss your options fully with your doctor and those close to you before you make your decisions.
- A BreastScreen counsellor can provide you with telephone support over the next few weeks until you have surgery. They can be contacted on 13 20 50 during office hours.

## Emotional Survival

Everybody responds in different ways to finding out they have breast cancer.

Feelings of shock, anger, sadness, fear and anxiety are common. Some women are relieved that a diagnosis has been made, ending the uncertainty they feel. Often women find it difficult to concentrate, are very tired, feel sick and can't sleep. You may experience some or none of these reactions. Your individual situation will affect how you respond to your diagnosis and treatment.



## What might help?

- **Make use of your support networks.** The love and support of those close to you is important. It helps to share the burden by talking to your partner, family and friends you trust. If you are open with them they will understand it is OK to talk about breast cancer.
- **Talk to your surgeon** or a general practitioner with whom you feel comfortable.
- **Talk to someone who has had breast cancer.** Women who have been through breast cancer will have experienced many of the same issues you are facing. If you contact the Cancer Helpline on 13 11 20 they can put you in touch with a Breast Cancer Support Service volunteer or Cancer Connect volunteer who will have been through a similar cancer experience. The "Look Good Feel Better" Program may also be helpful.
- **Speak to your doctor about a Breast Care Nurse.** Breast Care Nurses are available to provide ongoing support for women undergoing treatment for breast cancer.
- **Keep a diary** about how you feel and what is going on especially if you are unable to talk to someone about your experience.
- **Take time out to do something you really enjoy** e.g. painting, walking, reading, playing music, craft, whatever helps.
- **Information about breast cancer and treatment can help** to make you feel more in control and less anxious. There are many resources available - from your BreastScreen counsellor, the internet and the Cancer Council. If you are interested - just ask.