



# BREAST DENSITY

## *What is dense breast tissue?*

- Dense breast tissue refers to the appearance of breast tissue on a mammogram.
  - Breasts contain glandular, fibrous, and fatty tissue. Dense breasts have a lot of glandular or fibrous tissue and not much fatty tissue.
  - Dense breasts are common and not abnormal.
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## *Why does breast density matter?*

- Dense breast tissue slightly increases your risk of getting breast cancer, but it is pretty common.
  - Dense breast tissue looks white on a mammogram, making it more difficult for doctors to see cancer because breast masses or tumors also look white.
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## *How do I know if I have dense breasts?*

- Breast density cannot be felt.
- Breast density is determined by the radiologist who reads your mammogram.
- After you have had a mammogram, you will receive a letter from the radiologist with your mammogram results and your breast density.

## *What should I do if I am notified that I have dense breasts?*

- You should consider discussing any questions you may have with your health care provider.
  - Together, you can decide if any additional tests are needed based on your overall risk for breast cancer.
  - Tests may include breast magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), breast ultrasound, or breast-specific gamma imaging.
  - Check with your health insurance company to see what is covered, as some plans may not cover these tests.
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## *If I have dense breasts, should I still get a mammogram?*

- Yes, a regular mammogram is recommended and the best way to find breast cancer early.
  - Whether you have dense or almost entirely fatty breasts, it is important to get regular mammograms.
  - Talk to your health care provider about how often you should get a mammogram.
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## *What do I do if I cannot afford to pay for a mammogram?*

Women's Way may provide a way to pay for mammograms. Call 800-449-6636 or visit [health.nd.gov/womens-way](http://health.nd.gov/womens-way) to see if you are eligible.

