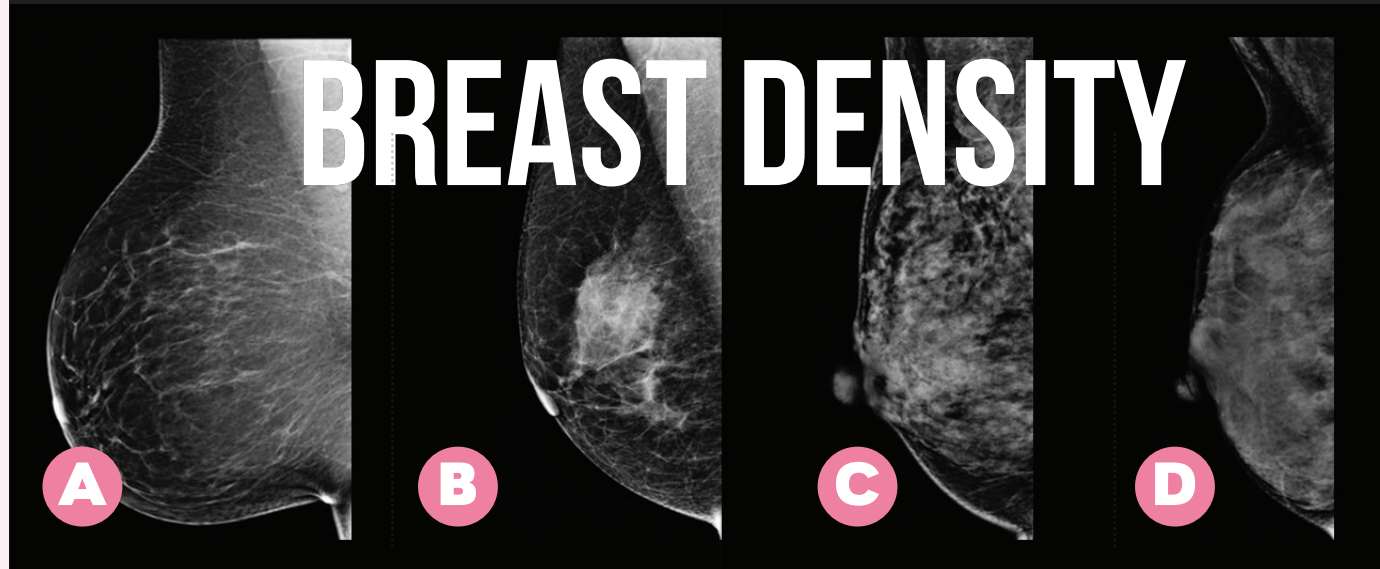
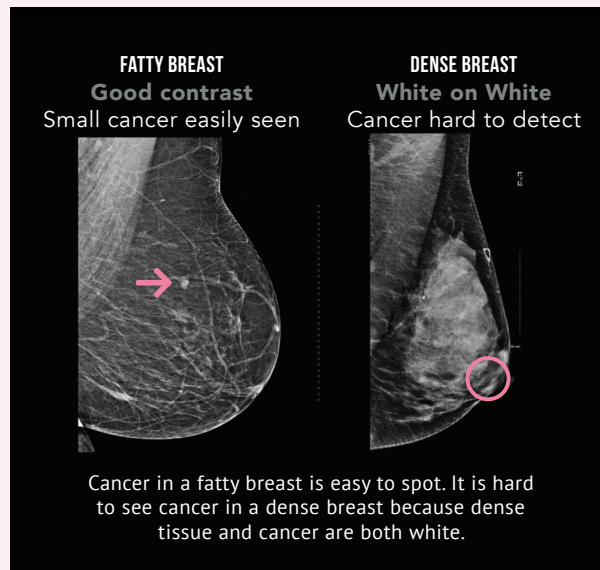


HOW CAN I FIND OUT MY BREAST DENSITY?

- Women have to be proactive to find out their density because they are not routinely informed. How you find out your breast density category depends on where you live.
- In ON, AB, NB, QC, PEI, women can ask their family doctor, "What does my mammogram report say about my density?"
- In BC, MB, NS, the doctor is not told, so women must submit a request for their records.
- In SK, NL, MB, YT, NWT, only women in Category D (over 75% density) can find out.
- For further details on how to find out your density, visit densebreastscanada.ca



FATTY

SCATTERED AREAS OF DENSITY

HETEROGENEOUSLY DENSE

EXTREMELY DENSE

<25% DENSE TISSUE

25-50% DENSE TISSUE

51-75% DENSE TISSUE

>75% DENSE TISSUE

WHAT IS BREAST DENSITY

Every woman's breast is composed of fat and breast tissue, but the proportions vary. Fat appears dark gray or black on a mammogram while breast tissue is white. Unfortunately, cancer also appears white on a mammogram. There are 4 categories of breast density. Category C and D are considered "dense breasts" or over 50 percent density. Dense breasts are common and normal. 43% of women over age 40 have dense breasts.

HOW IS YOUR BREAST DENSITY DETERMINED?

- Breast density is assessed by the radiologist viewing your mammogram.
- Breast density is not determined by breast size or touch.
- Dense breasts can feel soft, lumpy or firm and so can fatty breasts.

5 REASONS WHY YOUR BREAST DENSITY MATTERS

1. MAMMOGRAM ACCURACY CAN BE IMPACTED BY DENSE BREAST TISSUE

- Dense breasts are the number one reason for cancer being missed by mammography because both cancer and dense tissue show up white on a mammogram creating a masking effect.
- Mammograms miss about 50% of cancers in the highest category (D).

2. WOMEN WITH DENSE BREASTS HAVE AN INCREASED RISK OF BREAST CANCER

- The higher the density, the higher the cancer risk.
- Cancer is 4-6 times more likely in the highest density category (D) than the lowest category (A).

3. HIGHER RISK OF AN INTERVAL CANCER

- Women with category D are 18 times more likely to have breast cancer discovered between mammogram screenings when cancer masses are larger and can be felt.

4. HIGHER RISK OF CANCER IN THE OTHER BREAST

- Women with breast cancer who have dense breasts are nearly twice as likely to develop cancer in the opposite breast.

5. DENSE BREASTS POSE A GREATER RISK FOR BREAST CANCER THAN HAVING A FAMILY HISTORY

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I HAVE DENSE BREASTS?

- Speak with your doctor about: your density and its implications, any other additional breast cancer risk factors you may have and the best screening options for you.
- Perform regular self-exams between screenings. A normal mammogram result may not be accurate.
- To improve early detection, consider additional screening, such as ultrasound and/or MRI.
- Consider the modification of lifestyle factors such as diet, exercise, alcohol intake and hormone use to decrease cancer risk.
- Continue to have mammograms because they can detect calcifications, which can be the earliest sign of cancer.
- If you're diagnosed with breast cancer, consider MRI to ensure no additional tumours are hidden.

RESEARCH SUGGESTS SUPPLEMENTAL SCREENING FOR WOMEN WITH DENSE BREASTS

- Supplemental screening, such as ultrasound, can increase detection of early stage cancer obscured by dense breast tissue.
- Ultrasound finds an additional 3-4 cancers per 1000 women screened-these are cancers not detected by mammogram. Ultrasound finds cancers that are small and not yet spread to the lymph nodes, reducing aggressive treatments and improving rates of survival.
- Early detection of cancer is critical for less invasive treatment and the best outcomes.

For more information please visit
densebreastscanada.ca or email questions to
info@densebreastscanada.ca.



why
YOUR BREAST DENSITY
Matters

It's normal to have dense breasts, but women who have dense breasts need to understand the implications. Having breast density above 50% increases the risk of cancer. It also makes mammograms less accurate in finding cancer because both cancer and dense tissue appear white.



DENSE BREASTS
CANADA

Until there's a cure, find it small