

# What is cancer screening?

Screening is an important part of looking after your health

Cancer screening involves simple tests that look for early signs of cancer, or the conditions that cause cancer. Screening tests can find cancer before you can see or feel any changes to your body. When you find cancer early, it is easier to treat successfully.

In Australia, there are three national screening programs. These are for breast, bowel and cervical cancers.



## Breast screening



Breast cancer is the most common cancer in women

- Aboriginal women aged 40–74 should have a breast screen every two years.
- Having a regular breast screen is part of healthy living.
- When breast cancer is found early it's easier to treat. Most women recover and get back to their normal lives.
- BreastScreen NSW is **free**. A doctor's referral is not needed.



### What to do:

- Call us on **13 20 50** or book online at [breastscreen.nsw.gov.au](http://breastscreen.nsw.gov.au)
- Ask your doctor, nurse or Aboriginal health worker for more information.



## Bowel screening



9 out of 10 bowel cancers can be successfully treated if found early

- Bowel cancer is common among Aboriginal people.
- Bowel cancer can develop without any symptoms.
- Bowel cancer screening is the best way to detect bowel cancer early, when it is most treatable.
- People aged 50–74 will receive a free bowel screening kit in the mail every two years.
- Use your bowel screening kit when it arrives in the mail.



### What to do:

- To request a bowel screening test kit call **1800 627 701**.
- Talk to your doctor or Aboriginal health worker about getting the free bowel screening test.
- To have someone guide you step by step through the test call **1800 930 998**.
- For more information visit [health.gov.au/NBCSP](http://health.gov.au/NBCSP)



## Cervical screening



Cervical screening can prevent cervical cancer

- Women aged 25–74 should have cervical screening every five years.
- Cervical cancer can be prevented by having the Cervical Screening Test. The test looks for an infection called human papillomavirus (HPV), which causes cervical cancer.
- You can book a Cervical Screening Test with your doctor or nurse. They can collect your sample or you can collect your own sample at the healthcare clinic.
- If you choose to collect your own sample, you will be given a swab, instructions and a private place to do this.
- Some doctors provide cervical screening for **free**. You can ask about the cost when you book an appointment.



### What to do:

- Call **1800 627 701** to check when you are due for a Cervical Screening Test.
- Book an appointment with your doctor, nurse or Aboriginal health worker. You can ask for a female doctor or nurse to do the test, or you can collect your own sample privately at the clinic.
- For more information, visit [cancer.nsw.gov.au/cervical](http://cancer.nsw.gov.au/cervical) or [cancerscreening.gov.au/cervical](http://cancerscreening.gov.au/cervical)

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