

BREAST CANCER

KNOW YOUR RISK, KNOW YOUR OPTIONS

WHY YOUR RISK LEVEL MATTERS

Your risk level determines your personal risk of developing breast cancer throughout your lifetime. Knowing your risk of developing breast cancer helps determine when and how often you should be screened for breast cancer. Your risk level can also help determine what kind of screening is the best option for you. Knowing your risk level is the first step toward making sure you get the right screening at the right time.

WHAT DETERMINES MY RISK LEVEL?

Fixed (or non-modifiable) risk factors: These are factors you cannot change, such as

- Age
- Genetics and family history
- Breast density

Lifestyle (or modifiable) risk factors: These are factors you can change, such as

- Body weight
- Physical activity
- Nutrition and alcohol use

HOW DO I FIND OUT MY RISK LEVEL?

Talk to your healthcare provider about your **personal and family history**. You can use CBCN's *10 Questions to Help You Understand Your Breast Cancer Risk* checklist to guide this discussion. Be sure to ask about

- Genetic testing and whether it is appropriate for you.
- Your breast density grade and how it impacts your risk level.
- Your modifiable risk factors and what you can do to reduce your risk.

ONCE YOU KNOW YOUR RISK LEVEL, FOLLOW THE STEPS BELOW

If you are at average risk of developing breast cancer

- Most provinces and territories have their own screening guidelines. **Find out** what the screening guidelines where you live are, and follow the recommended screening.
- Get screened when you are invited to.
- Be familiar with the normal look and feel of your breasts so that you can notice and report any changes.

If you are at increased or elevated risk of developing breast cancer

- Find out if there are **increased- or elevated-risk screening guidelines** where you live and follow the recommended screening.
- If there are no guidelines where you live, speak to your healthcare provider about your risk factor(s) and the appropriate next step.
- Speak to your healthcare provider about what you might be able to do to reduce your modifiable risk factors and how you can monitor your non-modifiable risk factors.
- Read CBCN's Risk-Stratified Screening and **Dense Breast** advocacy guides to become familiar with risk factors of developing breast cancer.

If you are at high risk of developing breast cancer

- Find out if there are **high-risk screening guidelines** where you live and follow the recommended screening.
- If there are no guidelines where you live, speak to your healthcare provider about your risk factor(s) and the appropriate next step.
- Speak to your healthcare provider about what you might be able to do to reduce your modifiable risk factors and how you can monitor your non-modifiable risk factors.
- Read CBCN's Risk-Stratified Screening and **Dense Breast** advocacy guides to become familiar with risk factors of developing breast cancer.



WHAT IF I DON'T HAVE A HEALTHCARE PROVIDER?

If you do not have a healthcare provider, start with an online assessment to learn more about your risk level. If the online assessment shows that you are at increased or elevated risk, or at high risk of developing breast cancer, you may wish to visit a walk-in clinic to discuss next steps with a healthcare provider. Read CBCN's Risk-Stratified Screening and **Dense Breast** advocacy guides to help guide discussions with a healthcare provider at a walk in clinic. You can also speak to them about what you might be able to do reduce your risk level.