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Breast Cancer Screening and the World Trade Center Health Program

Is breast cancer screening available through the WTC Health Program?

The World Trade Center (WTC) Health Program provides screenings and treatment for health conditions, including breast cancer, related to the September 11th terrorist attacks. Breast cancer screening may be available as a part of the health monitoring exam.

What is breast cancer screening?

Breast cancer screening looks for cancer before you feel symptoms from the disease. A mammogram is a detailed x-ray picture of the breast that may show if cancer is present. Screening allows for earlier treatment, which may slow or even stop the cancer from progressing.

How does the WTC Health Program decide to screen for breast cancer?

The WTC Health Program follows government-screening guidelines¹ set by experts who make recommendations about cancer care and screening.

What breast cancer screening tests can I receive through the WTC Health Program?

If you are between the ages of 40 and 74, you may receive a digital mammogram once every other year.

What is the risk from breast cancer screening?

You will be exposed to a small amount of radiation during a mammogram, but for most women the benefits of

screening outweigh this low risk. Talk to your WTC Health Program provider if you are concerned or have other questions about the procedure.

What happens if there is a finding during my mammogram?

Your WTC Health Program provider will explain what this result may mean for future testing and possible treatment. The Program will cover indicated follow up and/or diagnostic tests if you have an abnormal screening. The WTC Health Program will also cover your treatment if the cancer is determined to be related to the September 11th terrorist attacks.

What happens if I receive a negative result?

Most likely, a negative result means that your doctor will not refer you for more testing and/or treatment. Your doctor will explain what this result may mean in more detail. The WTC Health Program will cover future screening as recommended by the government-screening guidelines.

Can I still be screened through my personal physician who is not a part of the WTC Health Program?

You may choose to have screening mammograms through your private physician. However, the WTC Health Program can only pay for care provided through the Program.

¹ The WTC Health Program follows the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) category A and B recommendations for breast cancer screening for women between the ages of 40 to 74. Available at <https://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/Page/Document/RecommendationStatementFinal/breast-cancer-screening1>