

## Breast Screening – Coming To Haltwhistle.

We are expecting the screening mobile unit arriving in Haltwhistle this December and we are hoping to raise awareness and encourage all eligible ladies to attend their screening appointments. The mobile unit attends every 3 years so it is important we take the opportunity for free screening while it is in our area.

Anyone registered with a GP as female will be invited for NHS breast screening every 3 years between the ages of 50 and 71. Eligible patients will be receiving invitations to book into clinic as from week commencing 22.11.2021, this will be done by letter and will have information on how to book your appointment.

If you are 70 or over, you will not automatically be invited for breast screening, but you can still have breast screening every 3 years if you want to. You will need to call your local breast screening service Tel: 0191 282 0202 to ask for an appointment.

**What is the importance of breast screening?** Regular breast screening can find breast cancer before you notice any signs or symptoms. Screening can help to find breast cancers early when they are too small to see or feel. These tiny breast cancers are usually easier to treat than larger ones. It is important to remember that screening will not prevent you from getting breast cancer but aims to find early breast cancers.

**What is breast screening?** Breast screening uses X-rays called mammograms to check your breasts for signs of cancer.

During breast screening you'll have 4 breast X-rays (mammograms), 2 for each breast. The mammograms are done by a specialist called a mammographer. The mammographer will be female and only take a few minutes. The whole appointment should take about 30 minutes.

Before starting, the mammographer will check your details with you and ask if you have had any breast problems. They will also explain what will happen during the screening and answer any questions you have.

*Breast screening is often uncomfortable and sometimes painful for some people. You can talk to the mammographer, who is trained to help you feel more comfortable and give you support. You can also ask to stop at any time.*

**If you think you are at higher risk of getting breast cancer,** Speak to a GP who will be able to refer you, if appropriate, to a genetic specialist who will discuss this with you. You may need to have genetic tests.

Those at increased genetic risk may:

- be invited for breast screening before you are 50
- be invited more often than every 3 years
- have MRI scans as well as mammograms – MRI can give a clearer picture in younger people

The specialist looking after you will explain how you will be screened.

### **Be Breast Aware**

Along with attending your screening appointment it is also important that you regularly check your breasts. Every woman's breasts are different but it is important that you are familiar with how your

breasts usually look and feel so are able to spot any changes and contact your GP. Speaking to your GP is important to rule out breast cancer. If cancer is detected, then appropriate treatment should be planned as quickly as possible.

The [NHS Breast Screening Programme](#) has produced a 5-point plan for being breast aware:

- know what's normal for you
- look at your breasts and feel them
- know what changes to look for
- report any changes to a GP without delay
- attend routine screening if you're aged 50 to 70

**Breast Cancer Now Touch, Look, Check** - In 2005, Breakthrough Breast Cancer developed a breast awareness message called Touch Look Check (TLC) to give women a clear, simple message to encourage them to check their breasts, as well as information about the signs and symptoms of breast cancer.

There are many reasons why someone might not check their breasts but doing so could make all the difference.

**Get to know your breasts with some TLC - Touch, Look, Check.**

**TOUCH YOUR BREASTS** Can you feel anything new or unusual?

**LOOK FOR CHANGES** Does anything look different?

**CHECK ANY CHANGES WITH YOUR GP**

 Check all parts of your breasts, your armpits and up to your collarbone (upper chest) for changes.

No matter what size or shape your breasts are, **check them regularly.**

**COMMON SIGNS OF BREAST CANCER INCLUDE...**

 A **lump or swelling** in the breast, upper chest or armpit

 A **change to the skin**, such as puckering or dimpling

 A change in the **colour** of the breast - the breast may look red or inflamed

 A **nipple change**, for example it has become pulled in (inverted)

 **Rash or crusting** around the nipple

 **Unusual liquid** (discharge) from either nipple

 **Changes in size or shape** of the breast

 **Pain** in your breast or armpit that's there all or almost all the time

**TOUCH LOOK CHECK™** **BREAST CANCER NOW**  
The Research Charity

Breast Cancer Now is a company limited by guarantee registered in England (0347600) and a charity registered in England and Wales (1160558), Scotland (SC045584) and Isle of Man (1200). Registered Office: Fifth Floor, Ibex House, 42-47 Minories, London EC3N 1DY.

Reference Source:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/breast-screening-mammogram/>

<https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/breast-cancer/getting-diagnosed/screening/breast-screening>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/breast-screening-programme-overview>

<https://breastcancer.org/>