Further screening for breast cancer 2017
If further examinations are required
You have received the letter giving the result of your participation in the breast cancer screening programme. It is possible that the X-rays have not provided enough information to allow a proper assessment and a definitive result can only be obtained after further investigation at a hospital. Nine out of every ten women who get this result do not have breast cancer. Alternatively, an abnormality may have been detected. Further investigation at a hospital will establish whether the abnormality is benign or malignant. Five out of every ten women who get this result do not have breast cancer. We have already informed your GP of the result. If you have not yet spoken to your GP, we advise you to make an appointment. It is impossible to tell in advance what examinations (or how many) will be needed at the hospital in order to make a definitive diagnosis. Sometimes the diagnosis becomes clear on the day of the hospital visit. However, additional examinations may also be required, which cannot always be performed on the same day or at the same hospital.

The hospital visit
In consultation with your GP, you can decide which hospital you will go to for further examination. You can use the information from www.monitorborstkankerzorg.nl when making your choice. This website combines patient experiences with information about the range of services available at the hospital. The hospital specialist will carry out a number of examinations. They will tell you when you can expect to receive the results. These examinations are usually performed on an outpatient basis. Your GP can provide you with any support you may need and answer your questions. And of course you can also put your questions to the experts at the hospital.

Possible examinations
The hospital specialist will decide which examinations are required. Sometimes several examinations will be needed in order to establish the diagnosis. The most common examinations are outlined opposite.
**Physical examination** The specialist examines your breasts and armpits to find out whether there is a palpable abnormality. They will also ask you a number of questions about yourself, your medical history and your family.

**Mammography** Additional pictures are taken of your breasts at the hospital with an X-ray machine. Sometimes it is necessary to make detailed and magnified images of one or both breasts. This provides a clearer view of the suspicious area in order to allow a better assessment.

**Ultrasound** This type of investigation uses sound waves. It provides additional information about the size and nature of the suspicious area. Ultrasound is only performed after X-rays have been made. A biopsy may also be required, which involves using a fine needle to remove a sample of tissue from the suspicious area.

In addition to these, the hospital may also need to carry out other examinations. More detailed information is available from:

- The Dutch Breast Cancer Society (BVN): www.borstkanker.nl/aanvullend_onderzoek
- www.kanker.nl/borstkanker
- The breast clinic at the hospital of your choice

Please note: The hospital examinations are not part of the screening programme. The costs of these follow-up examinations fall under your health insurance. You may have to pay some or all of the costs yourself. This depends on your excess amount and how much of it you have already used. If you have any questions about this, please contact your health insurer.

This leaflet does not contain information about any treatment that may follow the examinations. You can ask the specialist about such treatment.
The result of the examinations
It is possible that the result will quickly become clear and consequently not all of the examinations will be required. It may turn out that nothing is wrong. This will then have been established with the aid of the examinations performed at the hospital. Alternatively, the result may be a benign abnormality, e.g. a cyst (blister). However, it is also possible that the examinations may indicate a malignant abnormality, i.e. breast cancer. Often this will be a small abnormality, so small that you would not even have felt it. This usually means that breast cancer has been detected early and hence that there is a good chance of recovery.

What happens to the results?
The specialist receives your screening results from the screening organisation. You can lodge an objection to this. To do so, you can either request a form from the screening organisation or download one from the website. To find your screening organisation’s website, please go to www.bevolkingsonderzoekborstkanker.nl

If you have any questions
Further information can be found in the results letter or on the website www.bevolkingsonderzoekborstkanker.nl. If your questions are of a medical nature, it is best to contact your GP or specialist.

You can identify the screening programmes by this logo: bevolkingsonderzoek

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