



National Institute for Public Health  
and the Environment  
*Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport*

# Breast cancer *Screening*

Caribbean Netherlands - Saba



The breast cancer screening program is a free medical examination to check for breast cancer. It is up to you whether or not to participate. If you participate, we will take X-rays of your breasts. This allows us to detect breast cancer even before you start noticing anything is wrong.

## What is breast cancer?

Breast cancer is a malignant tumor in the breast. Over time the tumor can metastasize and affect other parts and organs in the body. Breast cancer may grow slowly, but its spread can also be rapid.

## Why is there a breast cancer screening?

About one out of seven women will develop breast cancer. The screening is intended to detect breast cancer at the earliest possible moment. Early detection of breast cancer is critical to successful treatment. It also means that in many cases, less radical treatment is required.

## Who can participate?

All women aged 50 to 75 are eligible and will receive an invitation to participate. Breast cancer occurs most frequently in this age group. You will receive an invitation every two years for a mammogram (X-ray) of your breasts.

## Reasons not to take part in this screening

Are you in poor health? Or do you potentially have a higher risk of breast cancer because of a hereditary predisposition, or because you have a family history of breast cancer or ovarian cancer? These could be reasons not to take part in this population screening, for example because a different check-up might be more appropriate for you. Talk to your doctor about which option is best for you.

## The screening in five steps

### 1. The invitation

You will be invited by Saba Cares to participate in the population screening. The screening will take place at Sint Maarten Medical Center (SMMC). Your contact person at Saba Cares will discuss with you the details of the appointment, such as the date of the appointment and time of your flight.



### 2. Your appointment

-  Your appointment will be at the hospital and takes about 20 minutes.

#### Remember to bring the following:

-  Proof of identity (passport, ID card or driving licence).
-  The information that you received from Saba Cares with details about your appointment.



### 3. The mammogram

When it is your turn, a staff member will explain the procedure to you. We will press your breast between two plates for several seconds for each image. This is necessary to produce a clear image, with minimal X-ray exposure. This compression process may cause some discomfort, but it does not harm your breast. You can tell the staff member if it becomes too much for you. Together, we can ensure that the mammogram goes as smoothly as possible.



### 4. Assessment of the X-rays

When the mammogram is done and the X-rays are clear enough to use, the images are sent to specially trained radiologists for assessment. Two different radiologists will assess the X-rays independently.



### 5. Your results

The results will be sent to you and to your doctor within two weeks.



## Follow-up examination or testing

Do you require follow-up testing because the images do not show enough information? Or because an abnormality was detected in one of the images? The doctor will contact you, explain what the results mean, and provide a referral to the hospital.

## Repeat screening

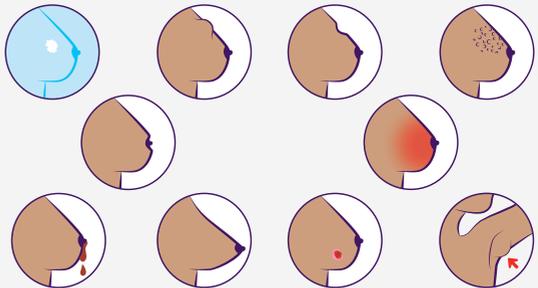
If no abnormalities are found, you will be invited again in 2 years.

## If you notice symptoms or changes in your breast, please visit your doctor:

- You feel a lump, swelling or area of thickened tissue in your breast.
- You see or feel a lump on your breast.
- You have indentations or dimples in your breast.
- You have small dents on the skin of your breast, like an orange peel.
- You have a wound on your breast that is not healing well.
- You see a red or scaly rash on or around your nipple, or your nipple has become sunken into your breast.
- You have a discharge of blood or green, brown, milky or watery fluid from a nipple.
- You feel a swelling in your armpit.
- Your breast feels different.
- There is a change in the shape or size of your breast.



*Do you see or feel one change to your breasts or armpit?  
Or do you have a complaint on your breasts?  
Don't wait for the screening but call your family doctor immediately!*



## Your data

If you take part in the population screening program, you give permission to use your details and the results of the screening for the population screening program and any follow-up testing at the hospital.

## Protection of your personal data and privacy

The administrative system that we use for the screening is well secured. Only those people who need to see your information to perform the screening can use it. Saba Cares and RIVM comply with the legislation that protects your privacy.

With the data from your participation in breast cancer screening, RIVM can improve the population screening through scientific research. The data from all participants combined will provide valuable information. The data is encrypted so that no one can see that it is about you. RIVM will only use your data for (scientific) research, if you give permission to do so. You can withdraw this permission at any time, without telling the reason why.





## More information

For more information about the advantages and disadvantages, about breast cancer and about the screening program, please visit [www.rivm.nl/bvoCN](http://www.rivm.nl/bvoCN) and our Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/screeningCN](https://www.facebook.com/screeningCN).

RIVM is conducting the breast cancer screening program in the Caribbean Netherlands. Do you have any questions, tips, complaints or compliments about the screening program? Please contact Saba Cares, SMMC or RIVM via the contact details in the invitation letter. Saba Cares, SMMC and RIVM have complaints procedures, which can be found at:

- <https://www.sabacares.org/file-a-complaint>
- <https://www.smmc.sx/Contact-Us/Complaint-Form>
- <https://www.rivm.nl/en/complaints>

## Information in other languages

Esta informacion esta disponible en Espanol.

<https://www.rivm.nl/en/population-screening-caribbean-netherlands/saba/information-materials>

This breast cancer screening program in the Caribbean Netherlands is carried out by



This is a publication by:

**National Institute for Public Health  
and the Environment**

P.O. Box 1, 3720 BA Bilthoven

The Netherlands

[www.rivm.nl/en](http://www.rivm.nl/en)

March 2023

*Committed to health and sustainability*