

PT ABNORMAL - B  
27 AUG 2020

[REDACTED]  
VANCOUVER BC V6H 1W6

ID#: [REDACTED]  
Exam Date: 21/AUG/2020

Health Care Provider: DR DANIEL EZEKIEL  
308 - 888 8 AVE W  
VANCOUVER BC V5Z 3Y1

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for using the Breast Screening Program. Your screening mammogram shows that you need further testing. Your health care provider (above) has been notified. You may have already been contacted to arrange for further testing as part of our Fast-Track program. If you are not contacted within the next week to arrange an appointment, please contact your health care provider directly.

Further testing is part of routine screening and will usually confirm that your breasts are healthy. You may expect one or more of the following tests to be arranged:

- Additional diagnostic mammographic images
- Breast ultrasound exam, which uses sound waves to examine the breast tissue
- Breast examination by a licensed medical practitioner
- Monitoring of a probably normal finding, which may include a follow up mammogram in six months
- Needle biopsy, which involves collecting cyst fluid or small pieces of breast tissues for analysis

Most women (about 94 in every 100) whose mammogram shows that further testing is needed will be found to have healthy breasts. For the few with breast cancer, the cancer is usually found early enough that it can be treated successfully. If you have any further questions, please call your doctor.

**Breast Density** - Your mammogram shows a breast density category of BI-RADS B. Your breasts are composed of mainly non-dense (fatty) tissue, with some scattered areas of dense tissue. This means you do not have dense breasts. Breast density can decrease over time, particularly as women age. Please see reverse side of this letter for more information about breast density.

Dr. Colin Mar, MD  
Breast Screening Medical Director

If you have received this report in error, please notify us at 1-800-663-9203

If you have a *My eHealth* account you can also view your results online: [www.myehealth.ca](http://www.myehealth.ca)

## What is breast density?

Breasts are made up of two main types of tissue – fibroglandular tissue and fatty tissue. Fibroglandular tissue appears dense on a mammogram, while fatty tissue does not.

Most women have a mixture of both dense and non-dense (fatty) tissue in their breasts. The amount of dense tissue compared to the amount of non-dense tissue in your breast is commonly referred to as your 'Breast Density'. Having any amount of dense breast tissue is normal and very common.

## How do I know how much dense breast tissue I have?

The amount of dense tissue in your breasts is measured by a radiologist using the Breast Imaging Reporting and Data System (BI-RADS). Your BI-RADS assessment can be found on your mammogram results letter. The amount of dense breast tissue increases with each letter:

| BI-RADS A  | BI-RADS B  | BI-RADS C  | BI-RADS D  |
|--|--|--|--|
| Your breasts are composed almost entirely of non-dense (fatty) tissue. | Your breasts are composed of mainly non-dense (fatty) tissue, with some scattered areas of dense tissue. | Your breasts are composed of a mixture of non-dense (fatty) tissue and dense tissue. | Your breasts are composed of almost entirely dense tissue. |

Your breast density can only be seen on a mammogram and is not related to the size or feel of your breasts. It varies from person to person and can decrease or change over time, particularly as women get older.

## Why is it important that I know my breast density?

1. Research shows that the risk of breast cancer increases as the amount of dense tissue in a breast increases. However, breast density only has a small impact on your overall risk. You should not be alarmed if you have dense breast tissue, but you should speak with your health care provider about your overall breast cancer risk.
2. Dense breast tissue can make it harder to find cancer on a mammogram. Normal dense breast tissue looks white. Breast masses or tumours also look white, so dense tissue can hide some tumours. This is why it is important to speak with your health care provider if you notice any changes in your breasts, even if you have recently had a normal mammogram.

## If I have dense breasts, do I still need a mammogram?

Yes. A mammogram is the only screening test proven to reduce breast cancer deaths. Many cancers are seen on mammograms even if you have dense breast tissue.

Besides getting regular mammograms, you should be familiar with the look and feel of your breasts and speak to your health care provider if you notice any changes. You can also reduce your overall risk of breast cancer by maintaining a healthy body weight, staying active, limiting alcohol intake, breastfeeding if possible, and weighing the risk and benefits of hormone therapy for menopause symptoms (learn more at [www.screeningbc.ca/breast](http://www.screeningbc.ca/breast)). Even though dense breast tissue is a risk factor for breast cancer, having dense breast tissue on its own does not mean that you are at 'high' risk for developing the disease in your lifetime. Other risk factors for breast cancer include getting older, having a family history of breast cancer, and certain inherited genetic mutations including BRCA1 and BRCA2.

## Are there additional tests available for women with dense breasts?

Currently, there is not enough scientific evidence to recommend other tests for women based on breast density alone. The evidence does show that other tests, such as breast ultrasound, may find additional cancers in women with dense breast tissue. However, breast ultrasound testing can have a high rate of false-positive results. A false positive result is an abnormal test result that turns out to be normal after further testing (which can include biopsy or surgery). Speak to your health care provider to see if breast ultrasound is something to consider.

See an educational video and learn more about breast density by visiting [www.screeningbc.ca/breast](http://www.screeningbc.ca/breast)