

Take care of yourself

A short guide for women over 40



Hope

There is treatment for every stage. The earlier, the easier the treatment.

Free

Mammograms are free in public health centres in Kosovo.

Every month

Check your breasts yourself, once a month.

1 Check yourself in 5 steps

1 Look in the mirror

Arms down. Look at the size, shape and colour. Are there small dimples, swelling or redness?

2 Raise your arms

Look again. Is the skin or the nipple pulled in anywhere?

3 Hands on hips

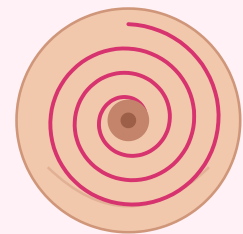
Press your hands firmly on your hips and see if the shape of the breast changes.

4 Feel with your fingers

Lie on your back with one hand behind your head. With three fingers, make small circles over the whole breast, up to the armpit. Press lightly, a bit harder and firmly.

5 Nipple and armpit

Gently press around the nipple. Does any fluid come out? Feel your armpit for lumps. Do the same on the other breast.



Small circles, from the outside towards the middle

When? If you still have periods: 3 to 5 days after it ends. If not: the same day every month.

2 When should I have a mammogram?

Under 40

Check your breasts yourself every month. If needed, an ultrasound is usually done.

40-49

Ask your family doctor about a mammogram. In Kosovo it is usually done after 40.

50-69

A mammogram every 2 years. This is the age when it helps the most.

70+

Talk to your doctor about whether to keep having mammograms.

Cases in your family? Tell your doctor. You may need checks earlier and more often.

Where do I go?

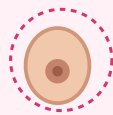
To your family doctor, at the Main Family Medicine Centre (QKMF) in your municipality. Mammograms are free in public health centres and hospitals. In October, a mobile mammography unit also visits municipalities that don't have one.

3 Signs to show your doctor



Lump or hard area

In the breast or armpit, that was not there before.



Change in shape

The breast changes size or shape.



Skin like orange peel

Small dimples in the skin.



Nipple turns inward

It pulls inward, when it was not like this before.



Fluid from the nipple

Fluid that comes out on its own, especially with blood.



Redness or flaky skin

On the breast or the nipple.



Swelling in the armpit

Or swelling above the chest, below the neck.



Pain that does not go away

In the same place, even after your period.

Noticed something? Most changes are not cancer, but don't wait. See your family doctor as soon as you can.

4 Habits that lower the risk



Move every day

Walk fast for about 30 minutes, 5 days a week.



Little or no alcohol

The less alcohol, the better.



Don't smoke

Quitting smoking is good for your whole body.



Eat healthy

More vegetables and fruit, a healthy weight.



Ask about hormones

If you take hormones for menopause, talk to your doctor.

5 Myths that are not true

MYTH

"It only affects women with cases in the family."

About half of the women who get it have no other risk except their age.

MYTH

"If it doesn't hurt, there is no problem."

At first, cancer often doesn't hurt. Get checked even when you feel well.

MYTH

"It can only be treated if found early."

There is treatment for every stage, and medicine gets better every year.



If you already have a diagnosis

You are not alone. There is treatment for every stage, and many women live long lives after diagnosis. Ask your doctor about anything that worries you and lean on your family and friends.