Should you be screened for breast cancer?

Risk factors for breast cancer
- Increase in age (most are diagnosed after 50)
- Having first menstrual period before age 12
- Starting menopause after age 55
- Having dense breasts
- History of taking diethylstilbestrol (DES)
- Taking hormones for longer than 5 years during menopause
- Taking birth control pills
- Never having given birth
- Having first pregnancy after age 30, or not having breastfed
- Having a low level of physical activity
- Being overweight, especially after menopause
- Drinking alcohol

Benefits and risks of breast cancer screening

**Benefit**
Finding breast cancer early when it is easier to treat.

**Risks**
- False positive screenings (when the test shows you may have cancer, but you do not) that may lead to more costly and invasive tests
- False negative screenings (when the test misses some cancers) that delay finding and treating cancer
- Discomfort during the test
- Exposure to radiation

Are you 50 to 74 years old?

- Yes
  - You should have a mammogram at least every 2 years
- No
  - If you are 49 years or younger and have the following high-risk factors:
    - You, your parent, sibling, or child has had breast cancer
    - Or
    - You, your parent, sibling, or child have a BRCA1 or BRCA2 gene mutation
    - Or
    - You had chest radiation before you were 30 years old
    - Screening may be recommended
  - If you are 75 years or older, screening may not be recommended

Talk to your doctor about your risk of breast cancer and your need for screening tests.