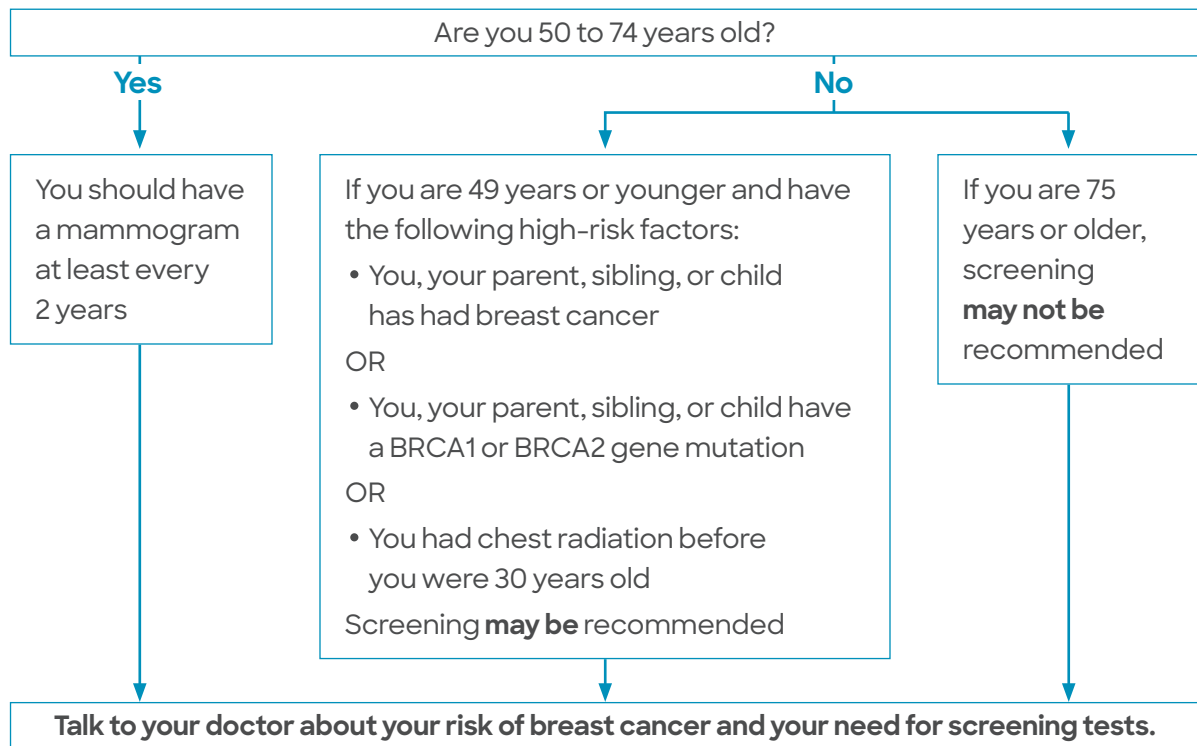


Should you be screened for breast cancer?



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

