

*It's especially important to get a mammogram every year starting at age 40. Finding breast cancer early can save your life.*

**"I've lived this long without getting breast cancer. Why should I bother with a mammogram?"**

A woman's risk of developing breast cancer increases as she gets older. Over three-fourths of the breast cancers diagnosed each year occur in women over age 50. A woman of 70 is almost twice as likely to develop breast cancer in the next year as a woman aged 50.

Chances are that you don't have breast cancer, so give yourself a present – the peace of mind that comes with knowing you don't. Have a mammogram – a simple breast x-ray – this year and every year.

**"But no one in my family ever had breast cancer."**

While it's true that a woman's risk is greater if a close relative has had breast cancer, more than 80% of breast cancers are diagnosed in women who do not have a mother or sister who has had breast cancer.

**"If I'm going to get breast cancer, there's nothing I can do about it."**

Yes, there is. We still don't know what causes breast cancer, but we do know what can improve a woman's chances for beating this disease: early detection. When breast cancer is found early, a woman increases her chances for successful treatment. A mammogram can detect a tumor much earlier than you could feel it.

If a lump is found early, while it's still small and before any symptoms appear, a woman has more options for treatment. Surgery often can be limited to just removing the lump and a small amount of breast tissue. Early detection means that a woman's chances for saving her breast are better, and the treatment her doctor recommends will almost always have fewer side effects.

