



THINK Pink!

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Breast cancer is a common disease, about 1 in 8 women will get breast cancer during their lifetime. Most of these women are over 50 years old. **Saba Health Care Foundation is therefore inviting all women over 50 to take part in the screening programme.** These women will be invited to undergo an examination once every two years.

The screening programme permits early detection of breast cancer in women who have developed the disease. The screening involves taking X-ray pictures of the breasts called a mammogram. This is at present the best available method of detecting breast cancer, it allows breast cancers to be seen before any abnormal lumps can be felt or further complaints have developed.

What causes breast cancer?

Breast cancer is a malignant tumour of the breast. It can spread to other sites and other organs in the body in the course of time. Some breast cancers grow slowly, but others are fast-growing. The cause of breast cancer is not well understood, but we do know that most breast cancers are found in women over 50.

What can be detected during screening?

Screening allows breast cancers to be detected early, even before they produce symptoms or can be felt. This gives a greater chance that treatment will be successful. This is an important benefit of screening.

Who should have breast cancer screening?

All women over 50 years are advised to have a breast cancer screening every two years. Women with a breast prosthesis can also take part in the screening programme. Women with a higher risk of breast cancer may be offered screening at a younger age. This applies to women who for example have family members with breast or ovary cancer at a young age. If you think that you have a higher-than-average risk of developing breast cancer please arrange an appointment with one of our doctors.

You do not have to partake in the screening programme if:

You are being treated by a specialist for an existing breast condition. If you are in doubt, ask your specialist if you should take part in the screening programme.

What are the costs?

The screening is free if you are insured via the Zorgverzekeringskantoor ZVK.

Always visit your doctor in the following cases:

- When you feel a lump in your breast.
- When you notice dimpling or an indentation in the skin of your breast.
- When the skin of your breast is thicker than normal in one area.
- When you notice bleeding from your nipple.
- When you notice other changes to your nipple.
- When your breast feels different from normal.

How to make an appointment

Please make your appointment for our clinic on weekdays with Dr. Boorsma, Dr. Koot or Dr. Blaauboer by calling 416 3288 option 3.

What does the screening involve?

Make an appointment to see one of the doctors from Saba Health Care Foundation at the A.M. Edwards Medical Center.

After a consultation you will receive a referral to the radiology department at Sint Maarten Medical Center.

- Saba Health Care Foundation will arrange your appointment which usually needs 2 weeks to arrange.
- The health insurance Zorgverzekeringskantoor ZVK will arrange for the ticket and daily allowance.

At Sint Maarten Medical Center a laboratory assistant will carry out the examination for which you should undress from the waist up.

The assistant will take X-rays of your breasts. The assistant positions one of your breasts on a plate and compresses it with the aid of a second plate. This is necessary in order to get a good image. Compressing the breast can be quite painful. If it is causing too much pain, you should tell the assistant.

The assistant will take two pictures of each breast. The whole process takes about 5-10 minutes. After the examination, you can get dressed again.

You should return to the waiting room, where the assistant will inform you whether the X-rays are of good technical quality. It is sometimes necessary to take additional X-rays or make an additional ultrasound.

Who looks at the X-rays?

The radiologists from Sint Maarten Medical Center examine the pictures. They will look for suspicious abnormalities that could indicate the presence of breast cancer. If you have already taken part in screening in the past, they will compare the new X-rays with those taken previously.

Screening is most beneficial if you take part every time. This makes it possible to compare the new X-rays with the previous images to look for differences. This allows breast cancer to be detected at an earlier stage

What are the possible results?

No abnormality

No suspicious abnormalities were seen on the X-ray. This is the case for about 980 out of every 1,000 women who are screened.

This result does not eliminate the possibility of breast cancer with absolute certainty.

Not all abnormalities are picked up in the X-rays, nevertheless 2 out of every 3 cases of breast cancer are detected with mammogram.

This means that it is very important for you to visit your doctor if you notice any changes in your breasts - even if you have recently participated in the screening programme.

Abnormal findings

An abnormality was detected on the X-rays. This is the case for about 20 out of every 1,000 women who are screened. You will then be referred to the surgeon from Sint Maarten Medical Center and you will probably undergo further examination. About 6 of these 20 women will have breast cancer.

How do you get the results?

Your local doctor will receive the results within 2 weeks. Please call in or visit our clinic for the results.



Saba Health Care Foundation
A.M. Edwards Medical Center