

# Cancer Screening for People without a Primary Care Provider

People that do not have a Primary Care Provider (family doctor or nurse practitioner) can still receive cancer screening. Regular screening for cancer, when you have no symptoms and feel well, is the best way to find cancer early, when it is easier to cure or there is a better chance of treating it. Cancer screening is free for you if you have an Ontario Health Card (OHIP).

There are 4 cancer screening programs in Ontario:

- Colon Cancer Screening
- Lung Cancer Screening for current or past smokers
- Cervical Cancer Screening
- Breast Cancer Screening



COLON CANCER CHECK

Colon cancer is one of the most common cancers people die from in Ontario. However, when found early, 9 out of 10 people can be cured. Colon cancer starts from abnormal growths, called polyps. Not all polyps turn into cancer but some may turn into cancer over time.

**Who is eligible for colon cancer screening?**

Average Risk:

Everyone between 50 to 74 years of age should be checked for colon cancer every 2 years using the fecal immunochemical test (FIT) if they have no family history of this type of cancer. The FIT is a safe and painless test that checks your stool (poop) for tiny amounts of blood that may be caused by colorectal cancer or pre-cancerous polyps. You can do this test at home and it only takes a few minutes.

**To be checked for colorectal cancer:**

Call 1-866-828-9213 to request that a FIT kit be mailed to your home or a pick up address.

Increased Risk:

If you have a first-degree relative (parent, sibling, or child) who has been diagnosed with colon cancer, it is recommended you are screened with a colonoscopy starting at age 50 or 10 years earlier than the age your relative was diagnosed, whichever comes first.

**To be checked for colon cancer if you are at an increased risk:**

Call 1-866-662-9233 to be connected to a primary care provider.

Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer related deaths in Ontario. This is because the cancer has often spread to other parts of the body or is large when it is found and treatment has less of a chance of working.



LUNG CANCER SCREENING FOR PEOPLE AT HIGH RISK

**Who is eligible for lung cancer screening?**

If you are between the ages of 55 to 74 and have smoked cigarettes every day for at least 20 years, you may be eligible for lung cancer screening. You do not have to have smoked for 20 years in a row, just 20 years in total. If you are eligible, it is important to get screened for lung cancer, even if you quit several years ago. People who are eligible to be screened will be offered a special type of low-dose CT scan that uses a small amount of radiation to take pictures of your lungs.

**To be checked if you are eligible for lung cancer screening:**

Call the Ontario Lung Screening Program at Lakeridge Health Oshawa at 1-905-576-8711 extension 34449.

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ONTARIO CERVICAL  
SCREENING PROGRAM

Cervical screening with a Pap test can find abnormal pre-cancer cells that could become cancer. Finding these pre-cancer cells and treating them early can prevent cervical cancer.

Human Papillomavirus (HPV) is the leading cause of cervical cancer. You can get a vaccination to help protect against some forms of HPV but should still have regular pap tests even if you are vaccinated.

## Who is eligible for cervical cancer screening?

If you are a woman or trans/nonbinary person with a cervix, 25 years of age and older, and have ever been sexually active, it is recommended you have a Pap test every 3 years.

If you are immunocompromised, it is recommended that screening start at the age of 21.

Regular screening for cervical cancer can stop at the age of 70 if you have had 3 or more normal tests within 10 years.

### To be checked for cervical cancer:

Some public health units, sexual health clinics and community health centres offer Pap tests. Use this website to find a sexual health clinic closest to you: <https://sexualhealthontario.ca/en/find-clinic>  
OR

Call Health Connect Ontario at 811 and ask for a local clinic that offers Pap tests.

Breast cancer is the most common cancer in Ontario women.  
1 in 9 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer in her lifetime.



ONTARIO BREAST  
SCREENING PROGRAM

## Who is eligible for breast cancer screening?

### Average Risk:

If you are a woman or trans/nonbinary person between the ages of 40 to 74, it is recommended that you have a mammogram every 2 years. You do not need a valid OHIP card for this type of cancer screening.

### To be checked for breast cancer:

Call 1-800-668-9304. You do not need a referral from a primary care provider.

### High Risk:

If you are between the ages of 30 to 69 and are at high risk of getting breast cancer, it is recommended you are screened once a year with mammography and breast MRI. You may qualify for high risk screening if you:

- have certain gene changes
- have a high chance of getting breast cancer based on your family or personal health history
- have had previous radiation therapy to the chest

### To be checked if you are at high risk for breast cancer:

Call 811 to be connected with a primary care provider who will refer you for high risk breast cancer screening.

For more information about cancer screening programs in Ontario, visit:

<https://www.cancercareontario.ca/en/cancer-care-ontario/programs/screening-programs>

Or

<https://www.cancercareontario.ca/en/get-checked-cancer>