



First Nations Health Authority
Health through wellness

Cancer Screening Programs in BC



Why is cancer screening important?

Cancer screening can help find cancer in your body before you have any symptoms. Finding cancer early through screening can increase the chances of successful treatment.

BC Cancer offers free screening programs for breast, cervical, colon and lung cancer. See below to find out if you are eligible for these screening tests and how to access these services.

Honour yourself, your family, your community and your ancestors and make cancer screening a part of your wellness.

Breast Cancer Screening

What is the screening test?	Who is eligible?	How often?	Where is the test completed?	How do I book a test?
Mammogram (an X-ray of your breasts)	Women, two-spirit, transgender or gender diverse individuals, age 40 years and older.	No family history of breast cancer: every two years. Immediate family history of breast cancer: yearly.	Hospital, health care clinic or mammography van.	Call 1-800-663-9203 to book a mammogram.

Note: if you have previously had a mammogram, BC Cancer will send you a reminder letter to book your next appointment. You can book your appointment on BC Cancer's website using the code included in the reminder letter.

Cervical Cancer Screening

What is the screening test?	Who is eligible?	How often?	Where is the test completed?	How do I book a test?
Cervix self-screening (a self-swab of your vagina)	People with a cervix ages 25-69.	Every five years if negative for HPV.	Wherever you are most comfortable (e.g., at home, health care clinic).	Call 1-877-702-6566, visit screeningbc.ca/cervix , or connect with a health care provider.
Pap test (a swab of your cervix)	People with a cervix ages 25-69.	Every three years.	Health care clinic.	Call 1-800-739-7367, visit screeningbc.ca/cervix or contact your health care provider.

Note: previously, the Pap test has been the main way for people to screen for cervical cancer. The cervix self-screening test is a new alternative that you can complete on your own, with a test that detects HPV, the virus that causes the abnormal cells.

Colon Cancer Screening

What is the screening test?	Who is eligible?	How often?	Where is the test completed?	How do I book a test?
Fecal Immunochemical test (FIT) (a test of your stool)	People ages 50-74.	Every two years for most eligible individuals.	At home and the test is returned to the lab.	Individuals can connect with a health care provider for a FIT form or call 1-877-70-COLON if they need assistance connecting with a lab in their community.

Note: Individuals with a history of adenomas or a family history of colon cancer may also need a colonoscopy every three to five years.

Lung Cancer Screening

What is the screening test?	Who is eligible?	How often?	Where is the test completed?	How do I book a test?
Low-dose CT lung scan (a picture of your lungs)	People ages 55-74 with a smoking history of 20 years or more.	Every one or two years.	Hospital.	Call 1-877-717-5864 to talk to a lung screening team member to assess their overall health.

How can I prepare for my cancer screening appointment?

- Talk to a trusted health care provider to ask them any questions you may have.
- Prepare for the appointment by using cultural or traditional health practices, like smudging, brushing or participating in ceremony.
- Connect with a trusted Elder or cultural wellness provider.
- Bring a friend or family member to your appointment.
- Practice relaxation or breathing exercises.
- Ask a second staff member to be in the room with you.
- Plan a celebration for, and after, your appointment.

Supports for you

Talk with your health care provider about cancer screening. You may need to be screened earlier, more often or with a different test if you have a family history of cancer or have known risk factors. Your health care provider can let you know what kind of screening you need and how often you should be screened.



If you do not have a trusted health care provider, consider calling the [First Nations Virtual Doctor of the Day](#) program or 811.

If you live in an area that requires travel to access screening services or a lab, transportation and accommodation coverage may be available to you with documentation of appointment or a health care provider's referral. Check with your benefits provider or call First Nations Health Benefits at 1-855-550-5454.

Remember that you can share any concerns or **report a health care harm** about unsafe care to FNHA's Quality Care & Safety Office (see contact information below).

Resources

- First Nations Virtual Doctor of the Day: 1-855-344-3800 (if you don't have access to a doctor)
- FNHA's Quality Care & Safety Office: 1-844-935-1044 or email quality@fnha.ca
- BC Cancer Screening: bccancer.bc.ca/screening
- FNHA Cancer Information and Resources: fnha.ca/cancer

