

Cancer Screening Tip of the Month – September 2025

Toronto Central Regional Cancer Program, Cancer Screening eBulletin

Screening Pregnant and Lactating People in the Ontario Breast Screening Program (OBSP)

- Pregnancy associated breast cancer (PABC), commonly defined as a breast cancer occurring during pregnancy, throughout 1 year postpartum, or during lactation, affects about 1 in 3000 pregnancies.
- Delays in PABC diagnoses frequently occur due to physiological changes or minor disorders related to pregnancy that can mask the initial signs or symptoms of breast cancer.
- For patients with suspicious breast cancer symptoms, breast imaging for assessment or diagnosis should be managed as clinically appropriate throughout pregnancy and lactation.

Breast Screening Recommendations for Pregnant and Lactating People:

The [Ontario Breast Screening Program \(OBSP\)](#) has developed recommendations to support breast screening discussions with pregnant and lactating patients.

- Screening with mammography during pregnancy and while lactating is safe and effective.
- Pregnant or lactating patients should be counseled on their options for screening and the risks of PABC.
- People who do not want to screen while pregnant can start screening three months after giving birth, even if they are lactating.
- Screening in the first three months postpartum is not recommended because there are changes in the breast tissue which can result in a mammogram being less effective.

Pregnant Participants	
Average Risk	• Participants should be offered screening with mammography
High Risk	• Participants should be offered screening with mammography and ultrasound • MRI is not recommended during pregnancy as the fetus could be exposed to the contrast dye
Lactating Participants	
Average Risk	• Participants should be offered screening with mammography
High Risk	• Participants should be offered screening with mammography and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) • Participants should be informed of the potential risks of contrast dye: a very small amount can pass into breast milk but does not pose a risk to the infant

Click [here](#) to access breast screening resources and tools to support primary care providers.

Click [here](#) to view the previous Cancer Screening Tip of the Month eBulletins.

If you have any questions or if you would like to receive the Cancer Screening Tip of the Month please email the Toronto Central Regional Cancer Program, Cancer Screening team: infoTCRCP@sunnybrook.ca