Breast Density Notification in New Brunswick

Across New Brunswick, radiologists are now reporting breast density using standardized Breast Imaging Reporting and Data System (BI-RADS) categories. Breast density results are included in mammography reports and the screening letters sent to women by the NB Breast Cancer Screening Program following routine screening.

The following are the BI-RADS categories used to describe the amount of dense breast tissue:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BI-RADS Category A:</th>
<th>BI-RADS Category B:</th>
<th>BI-RADS Category C:</th>
<th>BI-RADS Category D:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>almost entirely fatty</td>
<td>scattered areas of fibro glandular density</td>
<td>heterogeneously dense</td>
<td>extremely dense</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Low Breast Density

High Breast Density

Source: American College of Radiology (ACR) Breast Imaging Reporting and Data System- BI-RADS Atlas 5th Edition

What is Breast Density?

- Breast density is a measure used to describe the proportion of different tissues that make up women's breasts. Breasts are made up of fatty (non-dense tissue) and glandular tissue (dense breast tissue), which includes milk glands, ducts and supportive tissue.

- **Dense breast tissue is common and is not considered abnormal.**

- Breast density can only be measured by mammogram. Breast density cannot be detected by a physical exam and it is not related to breast size.

- A low breast density result (BI-RADS Category A or B) means you are at average risk for developing breast cancer.

- The higher the breast density result (BI-RADS Category C or D), the harder it can be to see or detect abnormalities on a mammogram. People with high breast density may have an increased risk of developing breast cancer.

- Breast density is assessed and reported by the radiologist as part of the mammogram report.

Regular Breast Cancer Screening

- Screening mammography is the optimal tool for screening average risk women aged 50-74.

- Routine screening should be done every two to three years with mammography if the results are normal.

- Women should know what is normal for their breasts and discuss their risk factors for breast cancer (i.e.: personal or family history of cancer, obesity, age, hormone replacement, breast density, gene mutations, etc) or discuss any changes in their breasts with their physician or nurse practitioner.


How can you request your mammogram or any other medical test results?

- Contact your physician or nurse practitioner to discuss your mammography results, including breast density.


For more information about breast cancer screening, visit www.gnb.ca/health.