

BARD

Breast screening After Radiotherapy Dataset

NHS breast screening for women who have had radiotherapy involving breast tissue when aged between 10 and 35 years

What You Need To Know

Why have I been sent this leaflet?

You have been identified by BARD as having had radiotherapy involving breast tissue when aged between 10 and 35 years.

Radiotherapy to the chest area is most commonly given for lymphoma but it can sometimes be used to treat other cancers too.

How does BARD work?

Having radiotherapy to breast tissue when aged between 10 and 35 years means you are at a higher risk of developing breast cancer later in life.

BARD is a confidential list of women in England who have received radiotherapy involving breast tissue when aged between 10 and 35 years. It has been set up to make sure all those at risk can be offered breast screening at the right time, even if they move to another address or a different part of the country.

When is breast screening offered, and how often?

Current national guidelines recommend that screening should start 8 years after your radiotherapy or at age 25 or 30 (depending on circumstances), whichever is later.

You will be offered breast screening once a year. Women who have an abnormal result will receive an appointment for further tests.

What type of screening is offered?

For women referred through BARD the following screening will be offered:

Women now aged 25 to 39

You will be offered MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) every year.

Women now aged 40 to 50

You will be offered MRI every year, and you will also be offered mammography (x-rays of the breasts).

Women now aged 51 to 70

Once you reach the age of 51, you will continue to be offered mammography every year, and some women will also be offered MRI. Mammography is a better examination for older breast tissue.

What if I don't want to have breast screening from an earlier age?

Having breast screening from an earlier age is entirely your choice. Choosing not to have screening doesn't affect any other aspect of your healthcare. If you do not wish to have this screening, please inform the breast screening centre that sent you the appointment.

In addition, if you do not wish to be included on BARD please let us know you would like to opt out by contacting us at chn-tr.BARD@nhs.net or write to us at the address below.

Please include your name and NHS number in all correspondence. The BARD team will then remove your details from the dataset.

Breast screening After Radiotherapy Dataset (BARD)

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If you choose to opt out of this screening, you will still receive an invitation for routine NHS breast screening between the ages of 50 and before your 53rd birthday. Routine breast screening is offered every three years to all women aged between 50 and before your 71st birthday.

If you decide not to have screening from an earlier age now, but later change your mind, then you can still be screened from that date. All you need to do is contact BARD (email chn-tr.BARD@nhs.net) and we will add your name to the list and contact your nearest breast screening centre who will organise an appointment.

What if I am pregnant or breastfeeding?

Screening with mammography can be safely performed but breast tissue will be more dense, making it more difficult to diagnose cancer. If breastfeeding you are advised to breastfeed or express milk prior to the screening examination. Shielding is not considered necessary due to the low radiation dose of mammography.

MRI during pregnancy is not recommended as the diagnostic image quality will be lower compared to when you are not pregnant or breastfeeding. However, you will be reviewed and your clinician will decide if MRI is necessary.

If you choose to postpone screening due to pregnancy or breastfeeding, MRI screening should restart 3 months after giving birth or following the end of breastfeeding.

Acknowledgement

Due to the nature of cancer registration processes, it is recognised that NDRS (National Disease Registration Service) cannot guarantee to hold data on all patients that would be eligible for inclusion in the BARD project screening. NDRS would not be held liable for any patient omitted from screening due to missing data and the BARD project is responsible for identification of the screening cohort. Areas where NDRS may be missing data on patients may include (but is not limited to):

- 1) Incomplete or inaccurate data received from health care providers
- 2) Patients who have opted-out from disease registration
- 3) Transgender patients who may be recorded as male on the NDRS database and therefore not identified as being eligible for inclusion

Where can I find out more?

- If you wish to discuss this in more detail please contact your local breast screening centre.
- BARD email address chn-tr.BARD@nhs.net
- NHS breast screening [Breast screening: high risk women - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/breast-screening-high-risk-women)
- Christie webpage <https://www.christie.nhs.uk/bard>
- NDRS webpage (data story) [BARD data story - NDRS \(digital.nhs.uk\)](https://digital.nhs.uk/data-stories/bard)