Women’s Cancer Screenings by Age
(for women at average risk)*

Beginning at age 18
- Become familiar with the look and feel of your breasts. Report any unusual lumps or changes to your health care professional right away.

Pap test every three years, from age 21-29

Pap test and human papillomavirus (HPV) testing from age 30-65

Monthly skin self-exam and an annual full body skin exam as part of a routine physical exam by your health care provider or a dermatologist.

Why: Skin cancer is the most common type of cancer. Cases of skin cancer are increasing in women in their twenties and thirties. Melanoma is the deadliest form of skin cancer, and can appear anywhere on the body. Watch for moles that change in size, shape or color or new moles and skin spots.

50+
Follow guidelines for previous age group, plus:
- Annual Fecal Occult Blood Test (FOBT) for colorectal cancer and either a flexible sigmoidoscopy every five years or a colonoscopy every 10 years

Breast Cancer Screening
Who: The American Cancer Society recommends the following screening guidelines for women at average risk. Women at increased risk should talk with their health care provider before age 40. Risk factors include a family history (especially a first degree relative) of breast or ovarian cancer, having a genetic predisposition to breast cancer or other specific factors. See resources at the end of this handout to learn more.

Women ages 40 to 44 should have the choice to start annual breast cancer screening with mammograms if they wish to do so.

Women age 45 to 54 should get mammograms every year.

FOR MORE INFORMATION
If you would like to learn more about any of these topics, please visit karmanos.org or call the Patient & Community Education department at 1-800-527-6266.

Reliable information is also available from the following sources:

American Cancer Society
877-ACS-2345
Cancer.org

Susan G. Komen for the Cure
877-GO-KOMEN (877-465-6636)
komen.org

National Cancer Institute
800-4-CANCER
Cancer.gov

*This information is intended to serve as a guideline only. Screening needs vary for each individual depending on your overall cancer risk. Please consult with a health care professional to decide which screenings are right for you and to make an informed decision.
Women age 55 and older should switch to mammograms every 2 years, or have the choice to continue yearly screening.

**What:** Women are encouraged to talk with a health care professional about the risks and benefits of screening to identify a screening schedule that is right for you.

**Why:** Your risk for breast cancer increases with age. Breast cancer is the second leading cancer killer in women. Most breast cancers occur in women with no family history of the disease. Although no test is perfect, screenings have and can help us catch breast cancer early when it is most treatable and beatable.

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**Women ages 40-64 without health insurance should contact the Breast & Cervical Cancer Control Program at 888-242-2702 for eligibility for free breast and cervical cancer screening.**

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Cervical Cancer Screening

**Who:** All women 21 and older. Women at an increased risk may need to be screened more frequently. Risk factors that increase your risk for cervical cancer include having multiple sexual partners, becoming sexually active at a young age and/or having HPV or other sexually transmitted diseases, especially HIV or AIDS.

**What:** Pap test every three years for women ages 21-29. Pap test and HPV test for women ages 30-65. Women over 65 or women who have had a hysterectomy should discuss their ongoing need for pap tests with a health care professional.

**Why:** Cervical cancer can be prevented by detecting pre-cancerous changes in the cervix. Cervical cancer is one of the easiest cancers to prevent and catch early through regular screening.

HPV Vaccine: HPV is a virus that causes cervical cancer. There are many forms of HPV, but there are a few types that increase your risk for cervical cancer. HPV is transmitted via skin-to-skin contact in the genital area. There are also two types of HPV vaccine, including one that is approved for use in males and females. The vaccine does not treat HPV or cervical cancer, but reduces the risk of contracting the virus. If you are interested, ask a health care professional about the benefits and risks of an HPV vaccination.

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Colorectal Cancer Screening

**Who:** Women of average risk, age 45 and older. People with increased risk should ask about screening before age 45. Risk factors include a family history of colorectal cancer, personal history or racial/ethnic background such as African American or Ashkenazi Jew. Women with a high-fat, low-fiber diet also are at an increased risk for colorectal cancer.

**What:** A colonoscopy every 10 years, or a flexible sigmoidoscopy every five years. Also ask about a yearly Fecal Occult Blood Test in addition to a colonoscopy or sigmoidoscopy.

**Why:** Screening for colorectal cancer is especially important because polyps can be found and removed before they become cancerous.

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Lung Cancer Screening

**Who:** Women who are age 55 - 80 and have a 30 pack a year (or 2 packs a day for 15 years) smoking history should be screened for lung cancer.

**What:** Annual screening with low-dose spiral CT scans. CT scans take detailed pictures of the lungs that can detect cancer early.

**Why:** Lung cancer is the leading cancer killer in women. Nearly 90 percent of cases are attributed to smoking. Quitting smoking is one of the best ways to help your lung health. Please refer to the resources at the end of this handout for information on quitting smoking or call 1-800-KARMANOS to get information and assistance on quitting.

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