

VA Breast Cancer Screening

for American Indian/Alaska Native Veterans

Screening For Breast Cancer Can Save Lives

VA recommends routine screenings for breast cancer to improve disease outcomes. The earlier the cancer is detected, the more successful the cancer treatment can be, potentially reducing the need for extensive treatments such as chemotherapy.

American Indians/Alaska Natives serve in the U.S. Armed Services at a higher rate than any other ethnic group.

VA is building culturally informed environments conducive to healing. VA is delivering the health care and benefits that American Indian/Alaska Native Veterans deserve and earned. VA wants to deliver American Indian/Alaska Native Veterans the health care and benefits they deserve and have earned.

Key Facts

- Comparatively, American Indian/Alaska Native Veterans are diagnosed with breast cancer at a marginally higher rate than their white and Asian Veteran peers, and at a substantially lower rate than their Black and Native Hawaiian Veteran peers.
- American Indian and Alaska Native women have lower rates of breast cancer screening compared to other women.

Stage 1A breast cancer has a



99%

SURVIVAL RATE
if detected early

Who Should Get Screened?

- Women aged 40-74 should get screened every other year starting at age 40 to reduce their risk of dying from breast cancer.
- Women Veterans will have the option to screen annually if they would like to do so.
- Women 75 or older, should talk with their provider before making a decision to be screened. Requests to be screened beyond age 75 will be honored following a discussion about the risks and benefits of screening.



Learn more about VA benefits specific to American Indian/Alaska Native Veterans:



How VA Can Help

VA's Breast and Gynecologic Cancer System of Excellence helps facilitate screening for patients deemed at high risk for breast cancer, and aggressively treats the breast and gynecologic cancers impacting Veterans. VA has over 70 facilities with on-site mammography and for those receiving care at sites without mammography, VA offers screening at convenient locations in the community.

In partnership with the Indian Health Service and Tribal Health Program, VA works to improve access to health care for American Indian/Alaska Native Veterans.

If you have questions about cancer care or screening options available at VA, visit cancer.va.gov.