

Will I continue to have routine mammograms, and how will I receive the results?

Yes you will continue to be called for yearly mammograms for at least five years after your treatment has finished, or until you are in your 50th year and can join the national NHS Breast Screening Programme.

Your mammogram result will be sent to you by letter and the next one will automatically be booked as required

If, as a result of your specific treatment, you do not need to have annual mammograms, you and your GP will be informed about this.

Are there any other regular tests that I may need to have?

You and your GP will be told if you need any additional regular checks, such as bone density scans (DEXA scans). These scans can tell us if you are developing bone thinning which could lead to a condition called osteoporosis. These will be organised via your GP who will receive clear instructions on what you need.

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More information is available on the Trust website www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

This document can be made available in other languages and formats upon request.

**WE ARE
MACMILLAN.
CANCER SUPPORT**

Breast care nurses, December 2019
Review due: December 2021

Welcome to the
Open Access Clinic

Information for new patients

Helpline: 0118 322 7420

This leaflet explains the Open Access Clinic, which the Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust has put in place for patients who have been treated for breast diseases, including cancer.

What is the Open Access Clinic?

This is a new type of follow-up appointment at the Royal Berkshire Hospital. It means that patients can call us when they have a problem so that they don't have to come to hospital for routine follow-up appointments when they are feeling well and symptom-free.

Why have you introduced Open Access Clinic?

We have introduced this clinic as it has been shown to be better for patients. It means that you don't have to make unnecessary trips to the hospital at times when you are feeling perfectly well.

Patients often find traditional face to face appointments a source of anxiety and can lead to them being tempted to put off reporting worrying signs and symptoms if a routine appointment is 'not too far away.'

Also, it has been proved that new problems are unlikely to be picked up by clinical examination alone. Most are identified by patients themselves, in between routine appointments.

Is the Royal Berkshire Hospital the only hospital to have the Open Access Clinic?

No – although it may be called different things in different places. More and more hospitals across the country are changing the way patients are followed up after treatment for breast cancer. Reducing the amount of visits has become much more popular with patients and is successfully managed by the hospitals in which these changes have occurred.

What happens next?

- In due course, you will be sent a Treatment Summary with your diagnosis, medication and any possible side effects from treatment in due course.
- In the meantime, enclosed is information on signs and symptoms to report and how to be body and breast aware;
- In this leaflet is information on how to use the helpline which gives you fast access to your breast care nurse if you need it, and the process your breast care nurse will follow if you need to be booked back into clinic at any time in the future.

Will I still be able to access the breast service in the event of concerns?

Yes. You can call the breast care team on the dedicated helpline telephone number (0118 322 7420) if you have any queries or problems.

How the helpline works?

The helpline is monitored between 9am and 4pm Monday to Friday and you will be called back by the breast care team within 48 hours or the next working day. If they feel that it would be appropriate for you to come back to clinic to be seen, you will be offered a clinic appointment.

If you need to ring this number, please leave a short message including your name, hospital number and telephone number on the answer phone.

The breast care nurse will talk through with you the symptoms or concerns that you have and decide with you whether you need to come back into clinic or have any further diagnostic tests. If the nurse feels this is necessary then you will be offered a clinic appointment within 14 days of phoning the helpline.