



Dense Breasts Notification — New California Law

On April 1st imaging facilities must notify patients if their mammogram results describe the finding of **dense breasts**. No need to panic... this is about raising awareness. Here's the official language your patients will receive:

"Your mammogram shows that your breast tissue is dense. Dense breast tissue is common and is not abnormal. However, dense breast tissue can make it harder to evaluate the results of your mammogram and may also be associated with an increased risk of breast cancer.

This information about the results of your mammogram is given to you to raise your awareness and to inform your conversations with your doctor. Together, you can decide which screening options are right for you. A report of your results was sent to your physician."

Fibrocystic breast disease is common, benign (non-cancerous) changes in breast tissues. The term "disease" is misleading, and many providers prefer the term "change." The condition is so frequently found (estimates over 50% of women) that it is believed to be a normal variation.

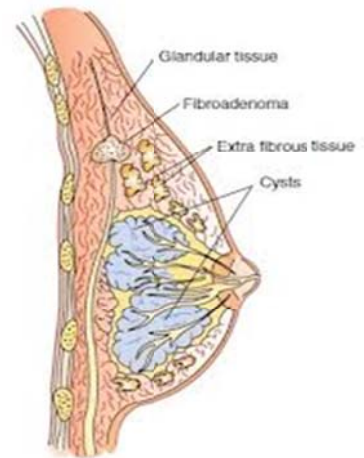
The cause of [fibrocystic breasts](#) is not completely understood, but the changes are believed to be associated with ovarian hormones since the condition usually subsides with menopause, and may vary during the menstrual cycle. For instance, some women report their breasts are more painful and firm a week or two before their period.

Presently there are no guidelines on how to improve breast cancer screening or additional testing for women reported to have dense breasts. So if your mammogram doesn't reveal any suspicious areas, then no further testing is needed. Do get annual mammograms, do monthly self-breast exams, and discuss if new recommendations have occurred with your doctor each year at your well woman examination.

Wishing you good health!

Scott Kramer MD, FACOG, FACS

PS: Should you receive notification that you have dense breasts I've placed a brochure on my practice's website [women's health library in the breast section](#) for you to view or print



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