Cancer Sreening Guide_TO-PRINT.pdf 1 25/9/2025 12:36 pm

Cancer screening guide for clinicians

A quick reference guide summarising key cancer screenings for Australian adults, covering national programs (bowel, breast, cervical, lung) and common non-program cancers (prostate and skin). Designed for general practice and healthcare providers, it outlines **WHO** to screen, **WHEN, HOW, WHERE,** and **KEY POINTS** to support patient discussions. The guide supports early detection and reduces preventable cancer deaths through proactive, evidence-based screening.

phn BRISBANE NORTH
An Australian Government Initiative

	Bowel cancer screening	Breast cancer screening	Cervical cancer screening	Lung cancer screening	Prostate cancer screening*	Skin cancer screening*
WHO	People aged 50–74 (those 45–49 can request a kit)	Women aged 50–74 (women 40–49 and those 75+ may also attend)	Anyone with a cervix aged 25–74	Adults aged 50–70 who smoke or quit in the past 10 years and have a 30+ pack-year history	Anyone with a prostate aged 50–69 (40–49 if high risk, for example with a close family history)	All adults, especially those over 40 or at high risk (fair skin, outdoor work, family history)
WHEN	Every 2 years	Every 2 years	Every 5 years after a negative HPV test	Every 2 years	Discuss with your GP; PSA blood test every 2 years if you choose to screen	Yearly clinician skin checks plus regular monthly self-checks
WHERE	At home with a free kit sent by post or request via your GP/pharmacy	BreastScreen Australia clinics and mobile units	At your GP or with a self-collection kit (clinic or home)	Referral from your GP to an accredited radiology service	GP clinic – blood is taken at a pathology service	Your GP, a skin cancer clinic or a dermatologist
HOW	Collect tiny samples from two separate bowel motions and send to the lab	Mammogram – each breast is briefly pressed between two X-ray plates so clear pictures can be taken (about 20 seconds)	A simple swab tests for HPV – you can take your own sample or ask your GP to do it	Low-dose CT scan of the chest (painless, a few minutes)	PSA blood test; if high, follow-up may include MRI or biopsy	Full-body visual examination; suspicious spots may be photographed or biopsied
TALKING POINT	More than 90% of bowel cancers can be treated successfully if found early	Detecting breast cancer early can reduce deaths by up to 40%	Cervical Cancer is one of the most preventable cancers, however 80% of women who develop cervical cancer, have never been screened or have not been screened regularly	Leading cause of cancer death in Australia, about 9,000 deaths in 2024; 5-year survival only ≈ 26%. Screening can find cancers early when surgery offers a real chance of cure	Most common cancer in Australian men. About 3,900 men die each year, but when found early the 5-year survival is ≈ 95%	Australia has the highest skin-cancer rate in the world. Two in three Australians will be diagnosed in their lifetime and ~2,000 die each year, yet most skin cancers are curable if found early
NOTE	The kit is mailed to you near your birthday; replacements are available from your GP or the program helpline	Women aged 40-49 and 75+ can book a free screen but do not receive an invitation via BreastScreen Queensland	You still need screening even if you have had the HPV vaccine	*National Lung Cancer Screening Program starts July 2025. Quitting smoking is still the best way to reduce risk	Talk with your GP about benefits and possible harms before deciding	Protect your skin every day and see your GP promptly if you notice any spot changing

***NOTE:** Not part of the national cancer screening programs