

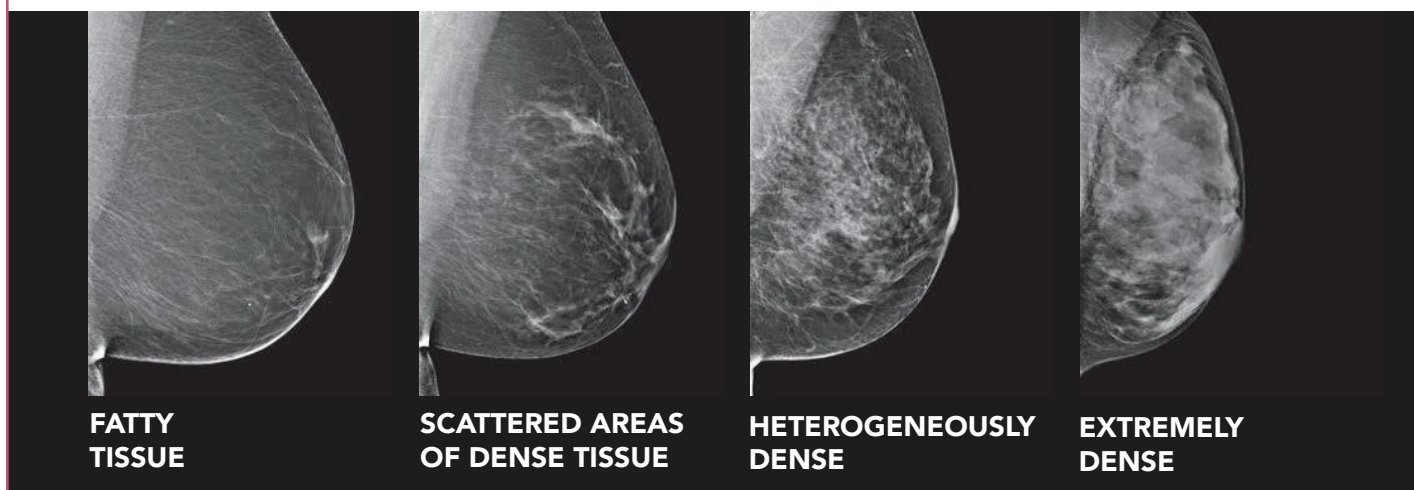


WHY IS BREAST DENSITY IMPORTANT?

Determining breast density can be very important in creating your yearly routine for assessing your breast health. Words like fatty, extreme and heterogeneous tissue can be confusing and misleading. Let's break down those terms so you can be informed.

Extreme, or Heterogeneous is High Density breast tissue. It has a higher proportion of fibroglandular tissue. This tissue reads white on mammograms.

Fatty or Scattered tissue is low density breast tissue. This tissue reads black or gray on a mammogram.



WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

- Dense breast tissue makes it harder for radiologists to see cancer.
- On mammograms, dense breast tissue looks white.
- Breast masses or tumors **also** look white, so the dense tissue can hide some tumors.
- In contrast, fatty tissue looks almost black. On a black background it's easier to see a tumor that looks white.
- Mammograms can be less accurate in women with dense breasts.
- Women who have dense breast tissue seem to have a slightly higher risk of breast cancer compared to women with less dense breast tissue.

You should receive a letter explaining your mammogram results and you may also log on to The Veranda portal and see your results. As always, you should call your health care provider if you notice any change in either breast. A lump, thickening or nipple leakage, indention, or changes in how the nipple or skin looks can signal a potential problem.

In addition, you are encouraged to talk to your health care provider about breast density, risks factors, and your individual situation. This will allow you to make better informed decisions if you need further evaluation.