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40 STORIES FOR 40+ WOMEN

CASE #4

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“I’m 32. My mum was diagnosed with breast cancer at 48. When should I start getting screened?”

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*For most women at average risk, routine mammograms start from **age 40** in Australia.*

(Source: BreastScreen WA, Cancer Australia)

FAMILY HISTORY

- If your **mother, sister, or daughter** was **diagnosed before 50**, you may be at increased risk.
- BreastScreen WA recommends **annual mammograms from age 40** in this situation.

CLINICAL PRACTICE

- In clinical practice, doctors may sometimes advise starting screening earlier than 40 often around 10 years before your relative's diagnosis.
- (e.g. Mum at 48 → start around 38)
- This is part of an individualised plan, not a public screening rule.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Depending on your family history and risk, your GP or specialist may discuss:

- Referral to a genetic service (for counselling and testing, e.g. BRCA1/2)
- Development of an individualised screening plan
- Use of other imaging such as ultrasound or MRI in specific situations

Disclaimer reminder:

- This content is for general educational purposes only and not a substitute for medical advice. Please consult your GP or breast specialist for recommendations tailored to you.

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“If you’re in your 30s and unsure when to start, the best first step is to talk to your GP. They can review your family history, assess your risk, and if needed, refer you to a breast specialist or genetic service.”

Reference

RACGP: Red Book – Guidelines for Preventive Activities in General Practice (10th ed, 2022)