



¹CANCER SCREENING PROGRAMMES

The purpose of the screening is to find people who are at risk of developing a particular disease but do not know it, because they feel well. The sooner a risk condition is discovered, the sooner you can intervene with fewer risks and more chances of success.

A cancer screening programme is a public health service that organizes regularly-based medical examinations for healthy people to identify those who are at risk of developing a particular cancer. The programme offers these at-risk people all the in-depth examinations which are required to make a diagnosis and, when needed, to receive a treatment.

The screening is not just one test, it's a path of cyclically organized tests for healthy people. During the various cycles, we find people at risk and follow them through diagnoses and treatments.

The ATS of the Metropolitan City of Milan organizes 3 screening programmes: the screening for [cervical](#), the screening for [colorectal](#) and the screening for [breast cancers](#).

Since the screening programmes have been activated, these tumors and their more aggressive forms are less frequent and cause fewer deaths. The more people participate in the screening programmes, the greater the benefits are.

The ATS sends home invitation letters for the screening tests.

If you are in the age-range to do a screening, you have not received an invitation, and you have a

¹ See Table 1 on page 9 of this document



Ospedale Maggiore di Lodi
Distretti e Presidi Lodigiani

Sistema Socio Sanitario



Regione
Lombardia

ATS Milano
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general practitioner ([even temporary](#)) in the province of Milan or Lodi, you should contact us to receive our invitation letter.

You can also contact us if you want to be tested, for personal reasons, by healthcare professionals of the same gender as you: we will look for a solution.

Screening exams are **free**, and they do not require any prescriptions by your doctor.

Just bring your health card and invitation letter with you.



<https://www.ats-milano.it/ats/carta-servizi/guida-servizi/prevenzione/screening-oncologico>

Contacts of Screening Communication Centers

Green number:

Districts of Milan East and Lodi: **800 940 007**

Milan West and Rhodense District: **800 705 630**

Milan District: **800 255 155**

Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 4pm

Trained healthcare professionals will answer all questions.



Lodi District: centroscreeninglo@ats-milano.it

[Distretto Milano Est: centroscreeningmiest@ats-milano.it](mailto:centroscreeningmiest@ats-milano.it)

Milan West and Rhodense District: centroscreeningmiovest@ats-milano.it

Milan district: centroscreeningmi@ats-milano.it



CERVICAL CANCER SCREENING PROGRAMME

WHAT

The cervix is the transition point (the narrow lower part of the womb, which leads into the vagina) between the vagina and the uterus.

Cervical cancer is the fifth [most common](#) cancer in women under the age of 50.

It's caused by the human papilloma virus (HPV), a very widespread virus that is transmitted through sexual intercourse. Against this virus there is a vaccine, offered to girls and boys at the age of 12, which is effective in preventing the infection and the growth of tumors caused by the virus.

WHO

Women aged 25-64 can participate in the programme.

Women who have had their entire uterus and vagina removed cannot participate.

Pregnant women can participate, but it is always advisable to consult their treating gynecologist.

It is not possible to undergo the test during the menstrual cycle. If you have your cycle on the test date, please contact us to postpone your appointment.

For women who have never had sex, screening is less useful, and can be painful: you should contact us to reschedule your appointment.

WHEN

The tests you are offered are:

- for women aged 25 to 29: a Pap test every 3 years
- for women aged 30 to 64: an HPV DNA test every 5 years

Women vaccinated against HPV by the age of 15 have a very low risk of cancer, and for this reason the screening process begins from the age of 30 with an HPV DNA test every 5 years.

WHERE

Pap tests and HPV DNA tests are performed by the obstetrician staff of the nearest public surgery. When further medical investigations are suggested, the gynecologists of the nearest hospital will perform them.

HOW

During a Pap test or a HPV DNA test, a midwife inserts a small instrument into your vagina and takes a small amount of material from the cervix. Its withdrawal takes just a few minutes. It's not painful, but it might give you a slight discomfort.

The exam cannot be done during the menstrual cycle. On the 3 days preceding the exam, it's best to avoid having sexual intercourse and internal vaginal treatments. If you want to reschedule your appointment, please contact us.

You will receive the result by mail within 2 months. If an in-depth exam with a gynecologist is suggested, we will call you to book it.

The deepening is colposcopy: a gynecologist observes the cervix passing through the vagina with the help of a small instrument. Colposcopy does not hurt, but it can cause some discomfort in case a small sample (biopsy) is needed. If colposcopy finds alterations, the most suitable check-ups and treatments will be suggested.

WHY

Participating in this screening programme and taking the HPV vaccine reduce the risk of getting cervical cancer. In cases when this kind of tumor develops, the screening is useful to find it earlier and allows it to be treated early, with fewer risks and more chances of success.



<https://www.ats-milano.it/ats/carta-servizi/guida-servizi/prevenzione/screening-oncologico/programma-screening-tumori-collo-dellutero>



BREAST CANCER SCREENING PROGRAMME

WHAT

The breast is the gland of the breast, which produces milk.

Breast cancer is the [most common](#) cancer in women.

WHO

This screening is aimed at every woman aged 45 to 74.

Women who have already undergone a mammography are not invited until 12 months have passed.

The screening is not offered to women who have already had breast cancer. Mammography cannot be performed during pregnancy.

If there has been more than one case of breast cancer in your family, especially in young relatives, in male relatives, or in both breasts, you should talk to your doctor about it. He/she will help you to understand if you need to make specific medical investigations.

WHEN

The test you are offered is mammography, the 'X-ray' of the breast:

- every year between 45 and 49 year-old women;
- every 2 years between 50 and 74 year-old women.

If you experience any breast symptoms (liquid coming out of the nipple in a woman who is not breastfeeding, changes in the shape of the nipple, breast nodules you can feel while touching) in the interval between one test and another, contact us to anticipate your appointment.

WHERE

The mammography is performed by the medical radiology technician of the nearest centre.

When further in-depth investigations are suggested (for example further mammography, an ultrasound scan, clinical examinations of the breast, a biopsy...), the radiologists of the nearest hospital will perform them.



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HOW

A radiology technician will ask you questions and explain the exam to you.

He/She will place one breast at a time on the surface of the X-ray machine, compressing it slightly to hold it still and capture the images well. Compression can be uncomfortable and sometimes painful, but these troubles pass quickly. The exam takes only a few seconds.

You will receive the result by mail within 2 months. If an in-depth analysis with the radiologist is suggested, we will call you to book it.

WHY

Taking part in this screening programme is useful to find breast cancers earlier, when they are still small, and to treat them early, with fewer risks and more chances of success.



<https://www.ats-milano.it/ats/carta-servizi/guida-servizi/prevenzione/screening-oncologico/programma-screening-tumori-della-mammella>



COLORECTAL CANCER SCREENING PROGRAMME

WHAT

The colon is the part of the intestine where faeces pass. It ends with the rectum, which communicates with the outside through the anus.

In this section of the intestine, swellings called polyps can develop and over the years they can grow into tumors. Polyps and tumors frequently cause small bloody spots that the eye cannot see, but fecal occult blood tests do.

In Italy, colorectal cancer [is the second most frequent cancer in women and the third in men](#)

WHO

The screening is aimed at women and men aged 50 to 74.

People who have already taken a fecal occult blood test are not invited until 2 years have passed.

People who have already undergone a colonoscopy are not invited until 5 years have passed. If you have noticed visible blood in your stools, immediately contact your doctor who will recommend you the most useful tests.

WHEN

The test you are offered is the search for occult blood in stools every 2 years.

Collecting only 1 stool sample every 2 years is enough for the screening: repeating the test immediately afterwards is not useful.

WHERE

You can collect your faeces comfortably at your home. Then go to a chemist's with your invitation letter and pick up the collection kit. It is best to ask the chemist on which days and times you can return the stool sample once collected. When the test finds blood in the stools, a specialist doctor from the nearest hospital will perform a follow-up colonoscopy.



HOW

The kit includes [instructions](#) for collecting a stool sample, the test tube where to put the stool, equipped with a small spatula to collect it, and the bags where to put the tightly closed tube once the sample has been collected. The kit does not include a collection sheet, but it can be replaced by placing toilet paper at the bottom of your toilet to avoid your stools from falling into the water.

Once you have collected the sample, take it back to the chemist's on the same day, or the next day at the latest.

You will receive the results by mail within a month. If an in-depth investigation is needed, we will call you to book it. To prepare for the exam, you will have to drink a purgative and plenty of water on the previous days: during a phone call we will explain to you how to get the purgative and how to take it.

The deepening test is colonoscopy: a specialized doctor observes the colon-rectum from the inside, through a small lens inserted, through a flexible tube, through the anus. Small polyps, if any, can be removed during colonoscopy. The examination can be annoying, but you are given a sedation therapy, which helps you to tolerate it well. After the sedation you will not be able to drive: you must be accompanied by someone.

WHY

Participating in this screening programme reduces the risk of getting colorectal cancer. In cases when this type of cancer develops, the screening is useful to find it earlier and allows it to be treated early, with fewer risks and more chances of success.



<https://www.ats-milano.it/ats/carta-servizi/guida-servizi/prevenzione/screening-oncologico/programma-screening-tumori-colonretto>



Table 1

ITALIANO	INGLESE
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<p>EDITING E REVISIONE A CURA DEL SERVIZIO PROMOZIONE SALUTE – ASST DI LODI</p>	<p>EDITING AND REVIEWING BY THE HEALTH PROMOTION SERVICE - ASST OF LODI</p>