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PATIENT RESOURCE · BREAST IMAGING

I Got a BIRADS 3 Mammogram — What Does That Mean?

BIRADS 3 means "probably benign" — a less than 2% chance of cancer. Here is what that finding means, why biopsy is not recommended, and what your next steps are.

THE BIRADS SCALE

- **BIRADS 0** — Incomplete, more imaging needed
- **BIRADS 1** — Negative, nothing abnormal
- **BIRADS 2** — Benign, definitively not cancer
- **BIRADS 3** — Probably benign, <2% malignancy risk
- **BIRADS 4** — Suspicious, biopsy recommended
- **BIRADS 5** — Highly suggestive of malignancy
- **BIRADS 6** — Known biopsy-proven malignancy

You are here: BIRADS 3 — Follow-up, not biopsy.

WHAT "PROBABLY BENIGN" ACTUALLY MEANS

Less than 2% — that is your actual risk

BIRADS 3 is formally defined as a finding with a malignancy risk of less than or equal to 2%. If 100 women received a BIRADS 3 finding today, 98 or more would have follow-up imaging that confirms a benign result. Your radiologist is recommending follow-up rather than biopsy because the evidence clearly shows this is both safe and appropriate. It is a clinical judgment made on your behalf — not a deferral or avoidance.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

Short-interval follow-up — the typical timeline

6 months
Repeat focused mammogram or ultrasound of the same area to confirm stability.

12 months
If stable at 6 months, full bilateral mammogram is performed.

24 months
If stable at both intervals, finding may be reclassified as BIRADS 2 — definitively benign — and you return to routine annual screening.

YOUR NEXT STEPS

Simple, specific, and actionable

1. Schedule your 6-month follow-up now.
Do not wait for someone to call you. Schedule before you close this page.

2. Go back to the same facility.
Consistency in equipment and comparison images allows the most accurate stability assessment.

3. Step away from the search bar.
Generic online statistics are not specific to your finding. More information is not always more helpful right now.

4. Call if your anxiety is significant.
A BIRADS 3 finding does not require a surgical consultation — but if you want one, the office welcomes that call.

MY QUESTIONS & NOTES

Write your questions below and bring this to your follow-up appointment.

This guide is for informational purposes only and does not constitute medical advice. Always consult your physician or care team for guidance specific to your situation.

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