Is my risk for breast cancer lower after age 69?
No. Your chance of getting breast cancer climbs with age. This is also true for other diseases like heart disease, diabetes, osteoporosis, and other cancers. The rate of breast cancer is highest for women in their 70’s.

Can women over 69 get a mammogram?
Yes, women over 69 can get a mammogram if they are referred by a doctor. They will not be sent to the Manitoba Breast Screening Program, but to a clinic or hospital that does mammograms. At mobile screening sites in rural and northern Manitoba, where there are no clinics that do mammograms, women can come until age 75. Women over age 75 require a doctor’s referral to attend a mobile site.

Should I continue going for mammograms?
There is no single answer to this question because it depends on your overall health and your chance of getting breast cancer. Discuss your own situation with your doctor and understand the benefits and risks of having screening mammograms.

The benefits of finding breast cancer early include living longer and having more treatment choices. The risks of screening include extra tests and the chance that cancer is missed. Of every 100 women screened for breast cancer, about 6 will go for extra tests even though breast cancer is not present. This can cause worry. Mammography is not a perfect test. About 2 in 10 breast cancers cannot be seen on the mammogram.

Some women have many other health problems. If you have a serious illness that will shorten your life, there may be little benefit in going for a screening mammogram. As well, some women cannot physically manage a mammogram. Women may choose not to go for regular mammograms for these reasons.
Why does the breast screening program stop at age 69?
The Manitoba Breast Screening Program was started in 1995 based on research that showed regular mammograms could lower deaths from breast cancer for women 50 to 69 years of age. However, the research did not include enough women over 69 years of age to give any advice for older women. The program is funded to provide service only for women 50 to 69.

What else should I do for breast health?
- See a trained health professional for a regular breast exam.
- Discuss mammograms with your doctor.
- Eat well and exercise often to lower breast cancer risk.
- Know how your breasts normally look and feel. See your doctor if you notice any of these changes:
  - A new lump
  - Puckering of the skin
  - New or bloody discharge from the nipple
  - A change in the nipple
  - Thickened hard skin
  - Change in size, shape or colour

Where can I get more information?
- Manitoba Breast Screening Program
  788-8000 or 1-800-903-9290
- CancerCare Manitoba Breast Cancer Centre of Hope
  788-8080 or 1-888-660-4866
- Winnipeg RHA Breast Health Centre
  235-3906 or 1-888-501-5219
- Web sites:
  CancerCare Manitoba - www.cancercare.mb.ca/MBSP/
  Canadian Cancer Society - www.cancer.ca
  Health Canada - www.hc-sc.gc.ca/pphb-dgpsp/ccdpc-cpcm/bc-cds/index_e.html