

# Breast Cancer Awareness

## Health checks

Breast cancer kills 15,000 women a year - but if it is caught early, it is easier to treat. You can do a lot yourself to detect the disease.

## How to examine your own breasts:

You should do this once a month, preferably right after your period. Your doctor can tell you how to do self-examination, but a good way to start is...

Start by lying flat on your bed, with your left hand behind your head, using your right hand to examine your left breast. Begin at the nipple using the flat part of your fingers, not the tips, and make small circular movements around your breast spiralling outwards. Now bring your arm down and use the same small circular movements to feel up to your armpit, then up to your collarbone and to the middle of your chest.

Repeat on your right breast. Then stand up and look at your breasts in the mirror. Get to know how they normally feel and look.

## You're looking for:

- Changes in size and shape
- Unusual dimpling or puckering in either breast
- Veins standing out
- Changes in skin texture or skin rash
- Unusual lumps or swelling

If you find any of these things don't panic! Most lumps are harmless, particularly in young women. But you must see your GP immediately.

Most successfully treated cancers have been detected by women who have examined their own breasts.

## Women over 50

Once you reach the age of 50 you will probably be sent an invitation to attend for mammography. This is a form of screening done by X ray and normally only used on women over 50 as the monthly changes in breast tissue make it difficult to detect changes and lumps in the breast by this method in younger women. Mammography is uncomfortable but not normally painful and it is a very effective way of detecting small lumps in the breast at a stage when they are more easily treatable. If you have any family history of breast cancer, it is particularly important to ensure that regular screening is carried out as well as breast self-examination.

## Breast cancer information and resources on breast cancer

In depth breast cancer information from Cancer Research UK for patients, health professionals and scientists. You can find information on how common breast cancer is. Information needs. Risks and causes. Symptoms, Diagnosis, Treatment, Finding support.

[www.cancerresearchuk.org/breastcancerinformation/](http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/breastcancerinformation/)

## Breast cancer at a glance

Find out about breast cancer at a glance from this link to leading Cancer Charity "Cancer Research UK".

<http://info.cancerresearchuk.org/cancerandresearch/cancers/breast/>

### **Breast Cancer - Your questions answered**

The "Breakthrough Breast Cancer" Charity provide through this link - "Breast Cancer Your questions answered" From understanding breast cancer and preventing it, to how it is detected and how it is treated, Risk Factors, Breast Awareness, Family History, Screening, Doiagnosis, Treatment Options.

[www.breakthrough.org.uk/about\\_breast\\_cancer/index.html](http://www.breakthrough.org.uk/about_breast_cancer/index.html)

### **The facts about breast cancer and breast health**

The "Breast Cancer Care" Charity through this link provides information on the breast, your concerns, referral to a breast clinic, benign conditions (non-cancer), non-invasive cancer, invasive (primary) cancer, secondary breast cancer, living with breast cancer, Younger women and Men and Breast Cancer.

[www.breastcancercare.org.uk/content.php?page\\_id=70](http://www.breastcancercare.org.uk/content.php?page_id=70)

### **Breast cancer in men**

This page from Cancer Research UK tells you about breast cancer in men which is a rare disease.

[www.cancerhelp.org.uk/help/default.asp?page=5075](http://www.cancerhelp.org.uk/help/default.asp?page=5075)

### **NHS Direct breast cancer information**

This is the National Health Service Direct link on breast cancer information.

[www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk/articles/article.aspx?articleId=76](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk/articles/article.aspx?articleId=76)