

Breast Cancer Awareness

What may cause breast cancer?

Although doctors are not sure what causes breast cancer, these may increase your risk.

- **Age:** Your risk increases as you age
- **Family History:** You are at higher risk if a close family member has it (mother or sister)
- **Hormones:** High estrogen levels caused by post-menopausal hormone therapy, excess body fat, lack of exercise or drinking alcohol increases your risk.

What are the symptoms of breast cancer?

- **A change in the way your breasts looks:** size, shape, dimpling
- **A change in the way your breasts feel:** painless lumps or hardening of breasts or underarms
- **A change in the nipple:** inverted or turned in
- **Clear or bloody fluid:** leaking out of nipple

You may not have symptoms in early stages of breast cancer, which is why it is important

to do self-checks once a month and get mammograms. After the age of 40 you should receive a mammogram every 1-2 years. Your doctor will help you decide how often you should have a mammogram.

Why is it important to check my breasts?

Each year 200,000 women are diagnosed with breast cancer. By doing monthly self-checks and annual mammograms you can find breast cancer in its earliest stages. This increases the chance for a successful treatment. Women have a 98% chance of surviving breast cancer if it is caught early and hasn't spread.

What do I do if I think I have a lump or breast cancer?

Call your doctor immediately. Tell him what concerns you and make an appointment. It may be nothing, but it is extremely important to talk with your doctor.

Breast Health & Early Detection

Beginning at age 18: Perform monthly self-exams and look for symptoms

Age 20-39: Receive a breast exam from your doctor once a year

By age 40: Have your breasts examined once a year and talk to your doctor about how often you should receive a mammogram

Age 40-49: Continue annual breast exams and get a mammogram every 1-2 years

Age 50 and up: Get annual mammograms

All ages: Maintain a healthy weight, exercise regularly, quit smoking and reduce alcohol consumption