



Breast Cancer

What is breast cancer?

Breast cancer is a malignant tumour that develops in breast tissue cells. It is more common in women but can also affect men.

Breast cancer often appears as a hard, irregular mass that, when palpated, feels different in consistency from the rest of the breast.

What care should be taken to detect breast cancer?

Early diagnosis of breast cancer is essential because it increases the chances of a cure. It also keeps the cancer from spreading to other parts of the body, improving prognosis, recovery and rehabilitation.

In order to diagnose the disease early, it is important to:

- Do a self-exam monthly after your menstrual period;
- See a doctor who specialises in breast diseases once a year;
- Participate in screening programmes.

The clinical breast exam may confirm or help interpret your self-exam.

What are the most common symptoms of breast cancer?

- Appearance of a lump/thickening in the breast or underarm area (in the armpit);
- Change in the size or shape of the breast;
- Change in colour or sensitivity of the skin of the breast or areola;
- Nipple discharge, with or without blood;
- Retraction of the breast skin or nipple.

See your doctor if you notice any change in your breasts.

Early detection of breast cancer increases the chances of a cure.



Breast Self-Exam

Examine your breasts once a month.

Breast cancer can be cured as long as it is detected in time; prevention is an effective way to combat the disease.

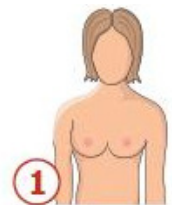
Do the breast self-exam after each menstrual period or, if you no longer menstruate, on the same day of every month. Carefully inspect anything that appears unusual or odd.

Follow these four steps:

1. In front of the mirror

Inspect your breasts with your arms at your sides.

Do you see anything unusual? Next, put your hands on your hips and check again.



2. Hands raised

Raise your arms overhead and see if both breasts rise in the same way. Check to see if one of them is drooping. Do you see any dimpled areas?



3. Spirals

Lie down and place a pillow under your shoulder and your arm behind your neck. With the fingers of the opposite hand move in circles around your breast.



4. Breast pressure

Press the nipple. Do you see any discharge? In the armpit, move in circles pressing with your fingers. Repeat the movements for the other breast.

