

Breast Cancer Self-Screening



A breast self-exam is the process of checking your breasts with both your eyes and hands to detect if there have been any subtle changes to how they look and feel. In the past, cancer organizations encouraged women to do these exams in a certain way every month, providing a step-by-step guide on how to check yourself. Recent research has shown that this is not necessary as there is not one single best way to examine your breasts!

So, what should you do? It is time to make your breasts your friends!

While most cases of breast cancer are found in people aged 50 and older, all women should be familiar with their breasts. This includes the entire breast area up to your collarbone, under the armpit, breast tissue, and the nipples. The goal is to understand how this area looks and feels well enough to notice any changes in the future.

Let's say you notice a slight change – what should you do?

Self-screening is very important, but it does not replace a clinical breast exam or a screening mammogram. **Make sure to tell your doctor in a timely manner about the changes to your breasts.** This allows your doctor or any other trained healthcare professional to perform a clinical breast exam and make an educated decision on the next screening steps. Many changes are not cancerous in nature. For example, it is normal to experience tender, lumpy areas and changes to breast size before your period.

Learn more about breast cancer screening with healthcare professionals (example: mammograms) in our next article coming soon.



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