

Be Breast Aware



Breast Cancer Screening Unit

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Patient and Family Education

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Learn to know what is normal for you

Early detection is the best defense against breast cancer. Being breast aware is one way to make sure any unusual changes are picked up early. Noticing the signs of breast cancer at an earlier stage is when the treatment will be most effective.

- The way breasts look and feel is different for every woman. Being breast aware, means getting to know your breasts and what is normal for you. For many women it is normal to have lumpy breasts, it is also common to have one breast larger than the other. Being breast aware is about noticing when a change is new, for example, noticing a new lump in one breast that has occurred recently and informing your doctor as soon as possible.
- You can talk to your doctor or nurse about how to be breast aware and discuss with them how to look for changes
- Breast cancer is less common in women under the age of 40. The likelihood of developing breast cancer increases with age
- If you are aged 45 or over it is strongly recommended that you contact Hamad Medical Corporation's breast screening call center. For more information about the Breast Screening Program ask your doctor
- Routine X-ray breast screening is not recommended for women under 45. If you have any cause for concern about your breasts, especially if there is a family history of breast cancer, tell your doctor.
- Remember, you are not wasting anyone's time if you ask for help. Most breast changes are not cancer but if there is a cancer present, the sooner it is reported, the simpler any treatment is likely to be

Some important tips to remember:

- Examine your breasts once a month when they are least tender (usually 5-10 days from the first day of your period)
- If you no longer have periods, choose one fixed day each month that will remind you to examine yourself
- If you are breast feeding, empty your breasts first
- Contact your doctor or nurse if there are any changes
- Remember, most breast changes are NOT cancer, but it is important to check to be sure

5 STEPS FOR BREAST AWARENESS

- Know what is normal for you
- Look at and feel your breast
- Know what changes to look for
- Report any changes without delay
- Regularly attend a breast screening clinic if aged 45 or over

What Changes to Look Out For

Appearance:

Any change in the outline or shape of the breast, especially those caused by arm movements, or by lifting the breasts. Any wrinkle or dimpling of the skin

Feelings: Discomfort or pain in one breast that is different from normal, particularly if new and persistent.

Lumps:

Any lumps, thickening or bumpy areas in one breast or armpit which seem to be different from the same part of the other breast and armpit – especially if the feeling is new.

Nipple change:

If you start having nipple discharge, bleeding or moist reddish areas which don't heal easily. Any change in nipple position –pulled in or pointing differently. A nipple rash on or around the nipple. Itching sensation around the nipple,