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*National*  
**BREAST  
CANCER  
AWARENESS**  
*Month*

**Take responsibility for your own Breast Health**

- Get a mammogram every two years
- **Do Breast Self-Examination (BSE) every month**
- Have your breast checked by a health professional every year

**Breast Cancer: Understanding Your Risk**

Have you ever wondered about your real risk of breast cancer? Studies have shown that many women don't know they may be at increased risk for breast cancer because of family history, age, etc., and so do not seek out the early-detection measures they should. On the other hand, there are women who are aware they may be at increased risk, but who don't know where or how to get the support they need to relieve their fears. If you think you may be at increased risk, talk to your doctor.

**What are the risk factors for breast cancer?**

Remember, 75-80% of all breast cancers occur in women with no risk factors other than being a woman.

**Major Risk Factors:**

- being a woman
- increasing age
- previous breast cancer
- strong family history of breast cancer (mother, sister, daughter)

**Minor Risk Factors:**

- These factors are linked with only a modest increase in risk.
- reproductive factors like age at menarche and menopause, age of first pregnancy, hormone use
  - diet or obesity
  - alcohol
  - some forms of benign breast disease

For more information: CASHH - Georgetown 702-8886 OR Canadian Cancer Society - Acton 853-1424

To be done same time every month, 7-10 days after the start of your period if menstruating. If not, use a fixed day each month.

There are a number of recognized methods for examining your breasts. One way is using the clock method. Pretend your breast is a clock. Using the flat pads of your fingers, press gently but firmly in small overlapping circles, starting at 12 o'clock, right below the collarbone and moving to the nipple.

**IN THE SHOWER**

Raise one arm. With fingers flat and soapy, touch every part of each breast, gently feeling for a lump or thickening. Use your right hand to examine your left breast, your left hand for your right breast.

**BEFORE A MIRROR**

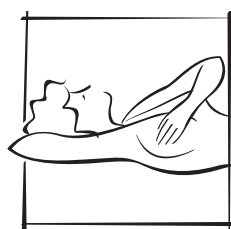
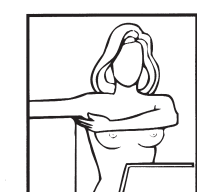
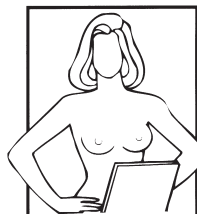
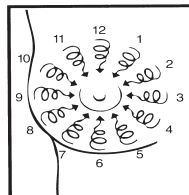
With arms at your sides, then raised above your head, look carefully for changes in size, shape and contour of each breast. Look for puckering, dimpling, or changes in skin texture, colour or rashes. Check for changes in the nipple such as whether they have become pulled in. With one hand on hip, tense and push arm forward to make a pocket under the arm and use the same method as when lying down to check this area. Repeat on other side.

With your arm resting on a firm surface, use the same circular motion to examine the underarm and side rib cage area.

**LYING DOWN**

You must also examine your breasts lying down. To balance the breast on the chest, place a towel or pillow under your right shoulder and your right hand behind your head. Examine your right breast with your left hand. Repeat on other side.

Call your physician if you find any changes or abnormalities.



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