



Self-Breast Examination



Care for Life

Self-Breast Examination

How to do a breast self-exam: The five steps

Step 1

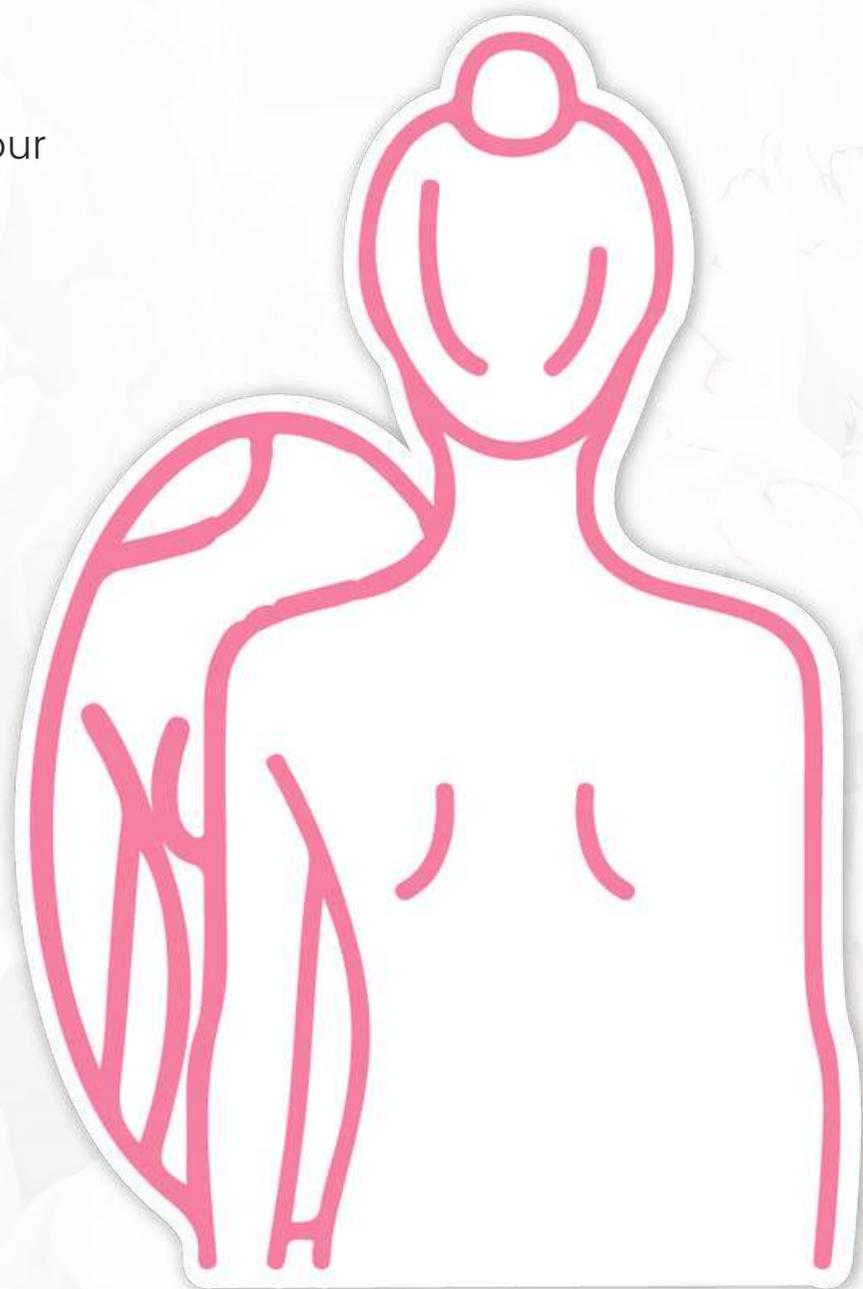
Begin by looking at your breasts in the mirror with your shoulders straight and your arms on your hips.

Here's what you should look for:

- Breasts that are their usual size, shape, and color
- Breasts that are evenly shaped without visible distortion or swelling

If you see any of the following changes, bring them to your doctor's attention:

- Dimpling, puckering or bulging of the skin
- A nipple that has changed position or an inverted nipple (pushed inward instead of sticking out)
- Redness, soreness, rash, or swelling



REF: https://www.breastcancer.org/symptoms/testing/types/self_exam

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Self-Breast Examination cont.

Step 2

Now, raise your arms and look for the same changes.

Step 3

While you're at the mirror, look for any signs of fluid coming out of one or both nipples (this could be a watery, milky, or yellow fluid or blood).

Step 4

Next, feel your breasts while lying down, using your right hand to feel your left breast and then your left hand to feel your right breast. Use a firm, smooth touch with the first few finger pads of your hand, keeping the fingers flat and together. Use a circular motion, about the size of a quarter.

Cover the entire breast from top to bottom, side to side – from your collarbone to the top of your abdomen, and from your armpit to your cleavage.



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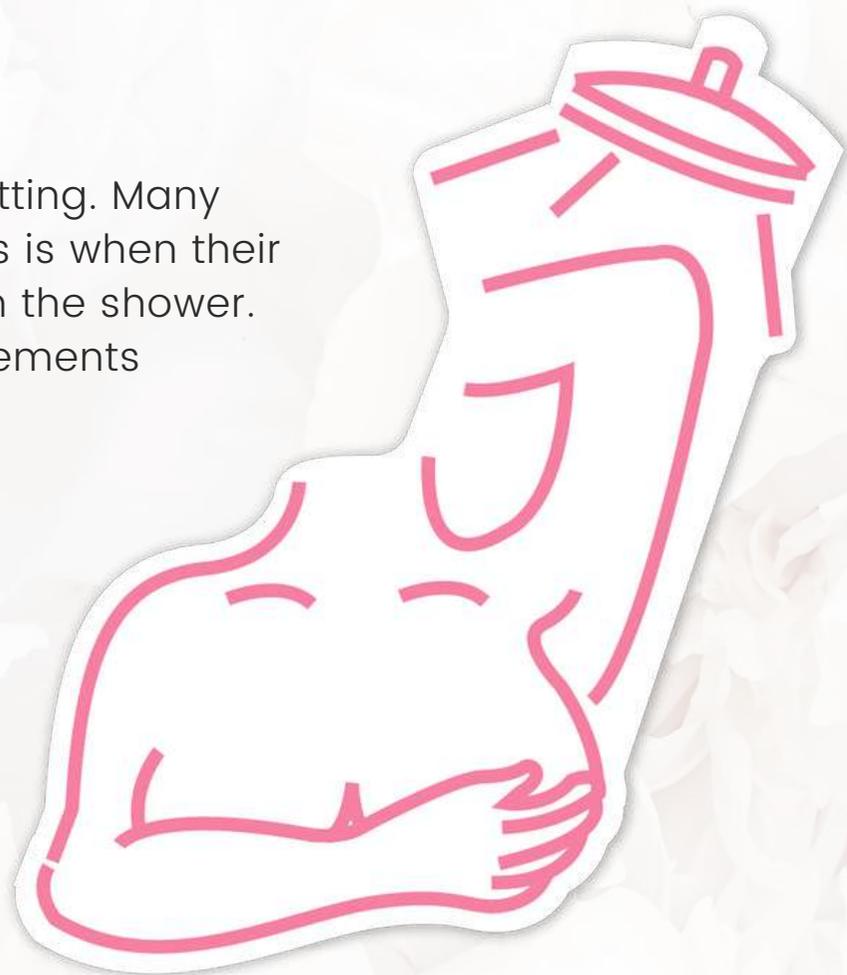


Self-Breast Examination cont.

Follow a pattern to be sure that you cover the whole breast. You can begin at the nipple, moving in larger and larger circles until you reach the outer edge of the breast. You can also move your fingers up and down vertically, in rows, as if you were mowing a lawn. This up-and-down approach seems to work best for most women. Be sure to feel all the tissue from the front to the back of your breasts: for the skin and tissue just beneath, use light pressure; use medium pressure for tissue in the middle of your breasts; use firm pressure for the deep tissue in the back. When you've reached the deep tissue, you should be able to feel down to your ribcage.

Step 5

Finally, feel your breasts while you are standing or sitting. Many women find that the easiest way to feel their breasts is when their skin is wet and slippery, so they like to do this step in the shower. Cover your entire breast, using the same hand movements described in step 4.



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Breast Cancer Screening

Ultrasound

An ultrasound helps doctors look at some breast changes, such as lumps (especially those that can be felt) or changes in women with dense breast tissue. We recommend women below 40 to do an ultrasound unless you have done a mammogram and a suspicious lump was detected.

Mammogram

A mammogram is an x-ray of the breast that looks for changes that may be signs of breast cancer. Recommended for women aged 40 and above to do a mammogram.

Breast Biopsy

During a biopsy, a doctor will remove cells from the suspicious area to be looked at in the lab for cancer cells. A very thin, hollow needle is attached to a syringe to withdraw a small amount of tissue from the suspicious area.

There are different kinds of breast biopsies. Ask the doctor which type of biopsy you will have and what you can expect during and after the procedure.



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