

Doing Your Breast Self-Examination (BSE)



Steps for BSE

1. Lie down and put a pillow under your right shoulder to elevate and flatten the breast. Examine each breast using the opposite hand. First, with arm under your head and then with your arms on the sides.

2. Use the *finger pads* (not tips) of the fingers. Apply three pressure levels: mild, medium and firm.

3. **Lines:** Start in the under arm area and move your fingers downward little by little until they are below the breast. Then, move your fingers slightly toward the center and slowly move them up again. Move up and down until entire area is covered. **Be sure to include the armpit area.**

4. In the shower, wet and soapy skin reduces friction and facilitates the feeling of nodules. Keep a hand overhead and examine each breast with opposite hand. For heavy or large breasts use one hand to support and examine with the other.

5. In front of a mirror, stand with arms hanging at your sides resting. Examine your breasts for any swelling, dimples, protrusions, retractions, skin irritations, injuries or changes in moles; also look to see if there are changes in color, texture or position of the nipple. Repeat with both hands behind your head.

6. Repeat Step 5 while contracting your chest muscles: First place palms together, in front of chest and push against each other. Then place palms on hips pressing down. This makes bumps and indentions show up and any sign of growing tumors.

7. Bend forward from your hips, resting hands on knees or on the arms of the chair. Use a mirror to examine your breasts and look for irregularities and abnormal variants, both are more pronounced in this position.

8. If you notice a lump, a discharge or any other change during the month - whether or not during your breast self-examination, notify your doctor.

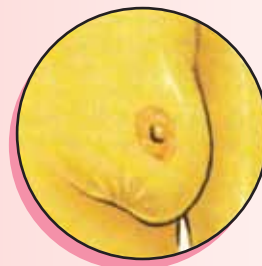
9. Supplement your breast self-examination with a breast exam regularly by your doctor, as part of your annual exam and cancer screening.

10. Do not squeeze nipples.

Know the warning signs of breast cancer.



A. Visible tumor



B. Dimples (holes) in the skin



C. Change in color or texture of the skin



D. Changes in the nipple, like retraction or inversion of nipples



E. Blood or secretion of any color from the nipple (clear, green or milky discharge is normal, if it's due to pressure of the nipple)