



Risk factors for breast cancer:

- Getting older
- Being overweight / obese
- Drinking alcohol
- A strong family history of breast and/or ovarian cancer
- Starting periods early or having late menopause (change of life)
- Previous diagnosis of breast cancer
- Previous benign (harmless) breast problems
- Radiation to the chest at a young age
- Smoking

You may help reduce your risk of breast cancer by:

- Maintaining a healthy body weight
- Being physically active (on a regular basis)
- Not drinking alcohol
- Reducing the amount of fat in your diet
- Eating more fruit and vegetables (fresh, frozen, tinned or dried)
- Breast feeding
- Don't start smoking or stop if you do

For help in stopping smoking go to
www.want2stop.info

If you have any concerns about cancer you can talk to one of our specialist nurses on the Cancer Focus NI free information and support NurseLine

0800 783 3339

Monday to Friday 9am - 1pm
Calls are free from a landline
nurseline@cancerfocusni.org



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Printed July 2018



Focus on
Being Breast
Aware

In Northern Ireland over 1,300 people are diagnosed with breast cancer every year, approximately 80% of these are over the age of 50. However, it can happen to both younger women and a small number of men. So whatever your age, being breast aware – knowing what is normal for you – makes sense.

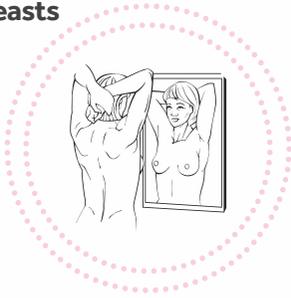
BEING BREAST AWARE CHECKLIST

1 Look at and feel your breasts

Look for changes:

Stand in front of the mirror

- Arms by your side
- Arms raised above or behind your head
- Hands on hips with elbows forward and chest muscles tensed



Feel for changes:

When lying down or in the shower / bath with a soapy hand

- Feel each breast in turn
- Keep your fingers together and flat
- Press firmly over entire breast, nipple and armpit
- Check the nipple for discharge



Don't forget to check under the armpits and right up to your collar bone!



2 Know what changes to look for

Anything that is not normal for you

- A lump
- Thickening of the skin
- A dimple or puckering of the skin
- Change in size or shape of one breast
- Any unusual sensation/pain/discomfort in one breast
- Veins becoming more visible
- Discharge from the nipple (especially blood-stained)
- Change in nipple shape/inverted nipple
- Persistent rash on the nipple



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3 Know what is normal for you

Two thirds of breast cancers are discovered by women themselves. Knowing your breasts and what is normal for you is vital for early detection. Check your breasts regularly by looking and feeling for changes.

4 Talk to your GP about any new breast change right away

If you have a breast concern, don't delay - make an appointment to talk it over with your doctor as soon as possible. If you need to have some tests, he/she can refer you to a breast clinic for the right type of help.



9 out of 10 lumps are harmless but always get them checked by your doctor

5 Go for breast screening when you are 50 or over

Of the women diagnosed with breast cancer each year in Northern Ireland, almost a third are picked up through the breast screening service.

A screening mammogram is an x-ray of your breast taken from two different angles. The screening is carried out by a female radiographer and will last no longer than 5 minutes.

If you are between 50 and 70 you will be invited every three years for free breast screening.

Are you over 70? You won't receive a postal reminder but it is important to continue to make appointments with your local screening centre. You do not need to have any symptoms to use this service. Remember it is important to be breast aware in between your appointments.

Early detection & screening saves lives!