

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 stop smoking help go to
www.stopsmokingni.info

The symptoms outlined in this leaflet are often caused by something less serious and doesn't usually mean it's cancer. However, finding cancer early makes it more treatable and a trip to your doctor could save your life. If in doubt, get it checked out. If it's not serious, your mind will be put at rest. You certainly won't be wasting anyone's time.

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 Nurse Line.

0800 783 3339

Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9am - 1pm.
Calls are **free** and **confidential** from a landline.
nurseline@cancerfocusni.org



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Focus on Being Breast Aware



In Northern Ireland over 1,450 people are diagnosed with breast cancer every year, over 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 or knowing what is normal for you makes sense.

Being Breast Aware Checklist

Look at and feel your breasts

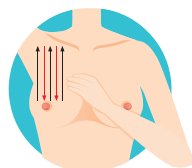
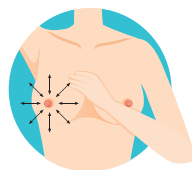
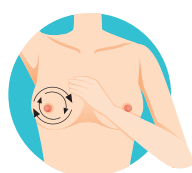
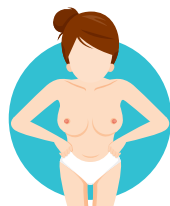
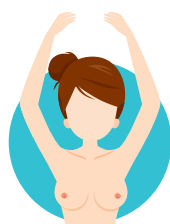
- **Look for changes:**

- 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:**

- 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!**



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

Know what is normal for you

Around 50% 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.



Talk to your GP about any new breast change right away

If you have a breast concern, don't delay and make an appointment to talk it over with your doctor as soon as possible. If you need to have some tests, they 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.

Go for breast screening when you are 50 or over

Of the women diagnosed with breast cancer each year in Northern Ireland, around 50% 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 consider making 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!

