

Over 70 – what now?

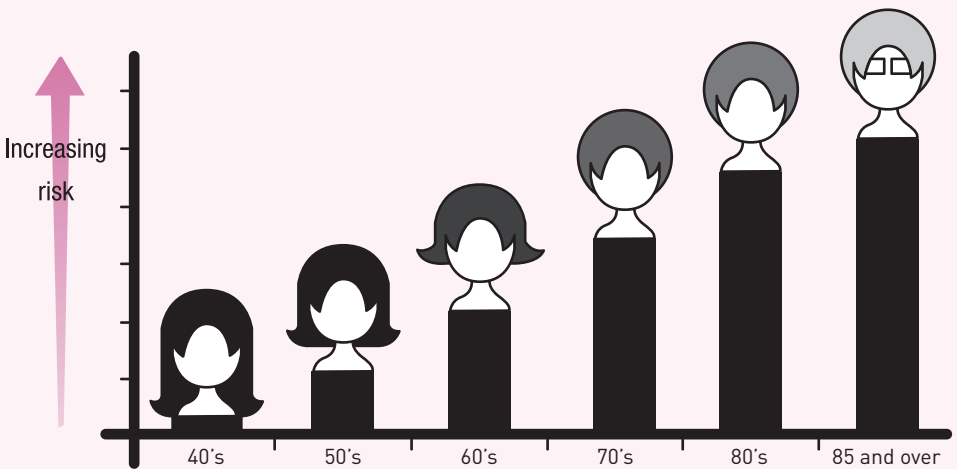
Looking after your breasts



Breast  *Screening*

What are my chances of getting breast cancer?

Did you know your chance of getting breast cancer is increasing as you get older?



*A third of women who get breast cancer are aged 70 and over.

If you find a change, go and see your doctor. It may not be breast cancer. But if it is, going to see your doctor as soon as possible makes it more treatable and may save your life.

Did you know that you can make an appointment for another breast screen?

After your last invited breast screening you can still be screened every three years, if you ask. You will be given a card to remind you when it's due.

Example



OVER 70?

Next mammogram due: _____

If you would like an appointment please contact the number below. Between 9.30am and 4.30pm Mon to Fri

Tel: _____

All you need to do is phone or write to your local breast screening unit to make an appointment.

You will find details about how to contact your local unit on the back of this booklet.

If you find a change in your breasts, seeing your doctor immediately will make you feel better

You will be **relieved** if the change in your breast was not cancer.

“I was so pleased that it turned out that nothing was wrong with me.”

(Anne, 71 years old)

You will be **reassured** if the cancer was caught early.

“It was good to know I’d given myself the best possible chance by getting treated quickly.”

(Sylvia, 72 years old)

You will be **satisfied** that you have done something positive about your health.

“I am very glad that I decided to look after myself.”

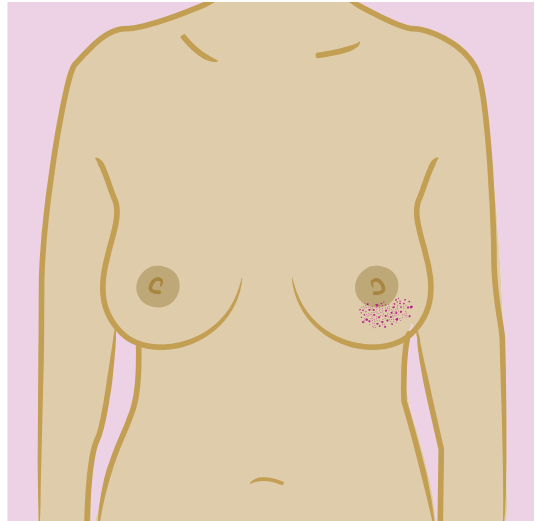
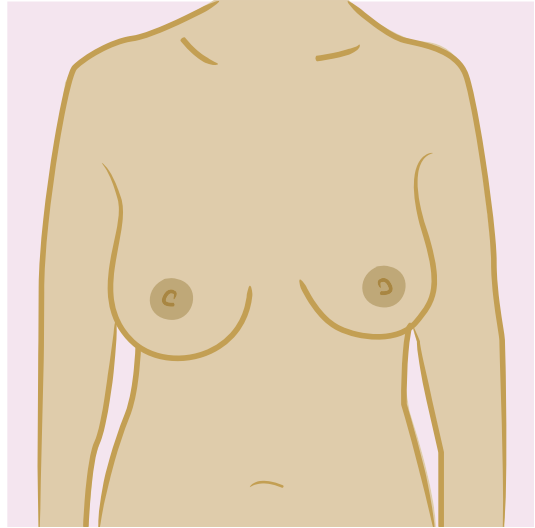
(Margaret, 70 years old)

What changes should I look for in my breasts?

You should look for any new change in your breast.

Appearance

A change in size or outline of either breast, especially those caused by arm movement; any puckering, dimpling or redness of the skin; or veins that stand out more than usual.



Illustrations courtesy of Breast Cancer Care

Feelings

Pain or discomfort in one part of either breast or in your armpit, particularly if new and persistent.

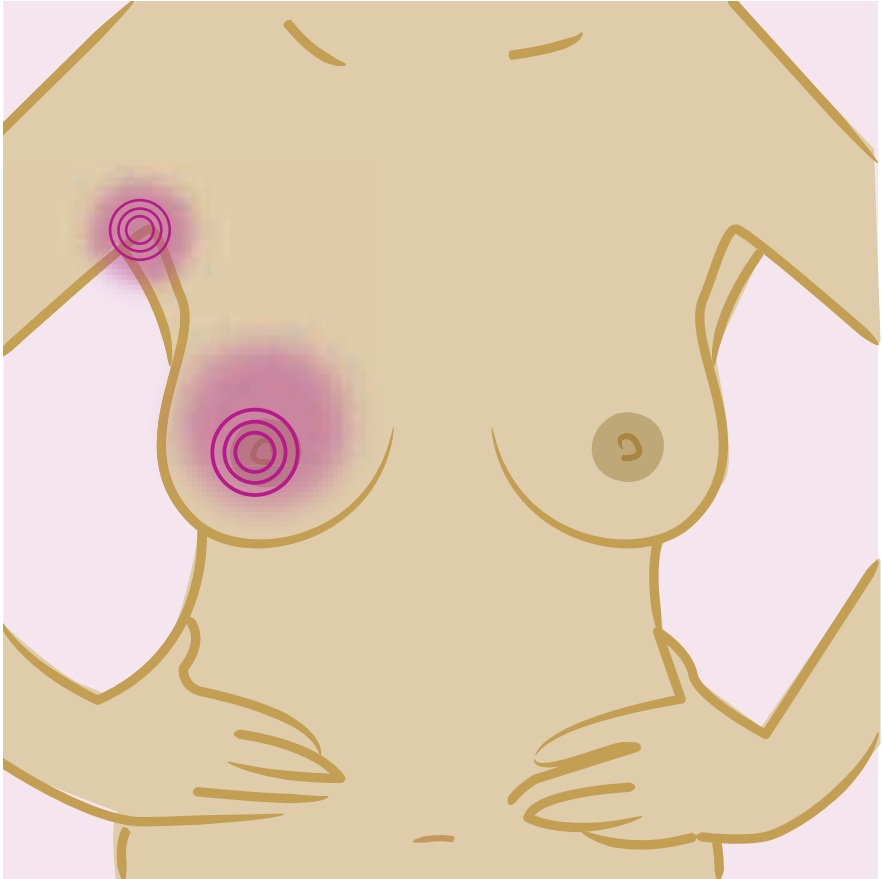
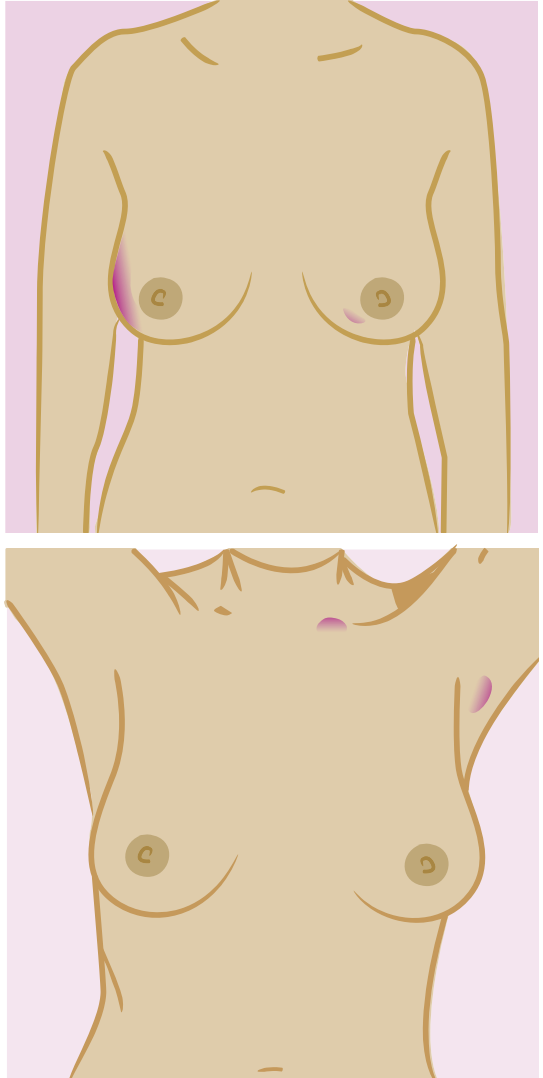


Illustration courtesy of Breast Cancer Care

Lumps

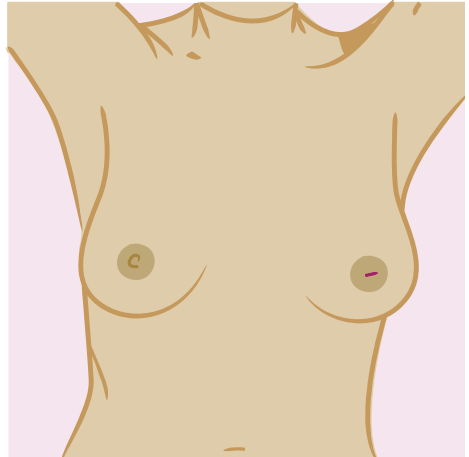
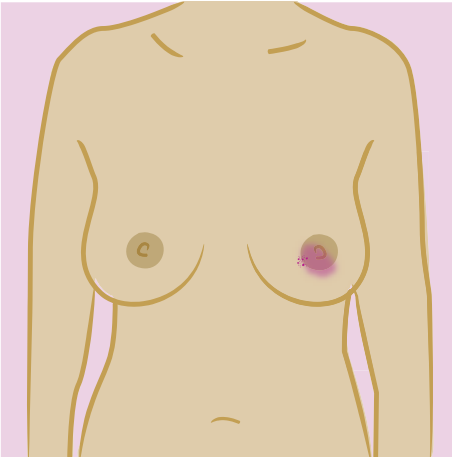
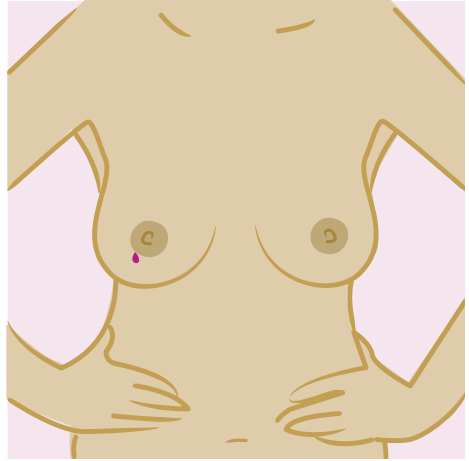
Any lumps or thickening in either breast that feels different from the other breast; any swelling or lumps under your armpit or around your collarbone.



Illustrations courtesy of Breast Cancer Care

Nipple change

A nipple that has become pulled in, changed shape or shows signs of any discharge, bleeding, rash or crusted, flaky skin.



Illustrations courtesy of Breast Cancer Care

The breast awareness 5 point code

1. Know what is normal for you
2. Know what changes to look and feel for
3. Look and feel
4. Report any changes to your GP immediately
5. Attend for breast screening from the age of 50

How do I look and feel for changes in my breasts?

The most important thing is to get used to what your breasts normally look and feel like. You will then be the first to notice if something is different.

To get into the habit, you could plan to look at and feel your breasts once a month. (You may find it useful to keep this booklet.)

Once you get used to it, it is quick and easy to do.

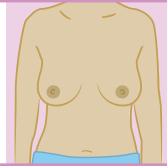
Look and feel

Many women find it easy to look at and feel their breasts for changes.

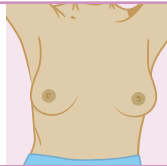
You can follow these easy steps.

Stand in front of the mirror to look at your breasts properly.

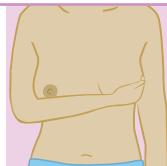
Look at your breasts from the front with your hands by your sides.



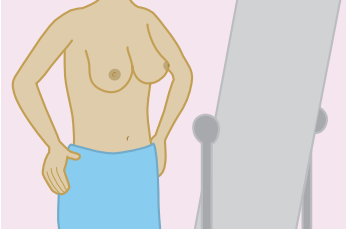
Put your arms up in the air above your head.



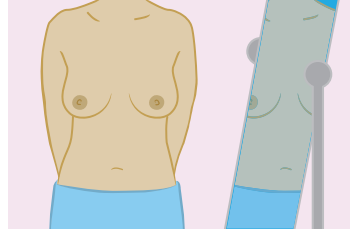
Also, it's a good idea to lift up your breasts so you can see the undersides.



Put your hands on your hips.

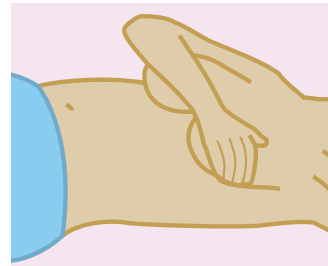
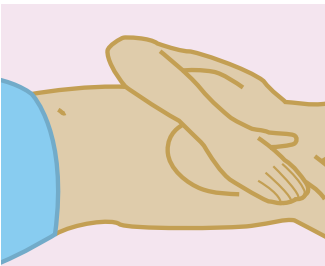


Turn your body to each side so that you can see the sides of your breasts properly.



Try feeling your breasts when you are lying in bed, getting dressed, or in the bath or shower - whatever suits you best.

Remember to feel all of your breast – feel around your nipple, the rest of your breast and up into your armpit.



When you feel your breasts, it's a good idea to keep your hand flat and your fingers straight and together. Do not prod the breast with your fingertips because this might push any lump away.

Do something positive for your health – fill in this page today

Look and feel

Decide **where** you will check how your breasts normally look and feel

I will **look** at my breasts
(for example, in my bedroom mirror)

I will **feel** my breasts
(for example, when I am in bed)

Decide what will help you **remember to look at and feel your breasts** at least once a month

I will **put a reminder**
(for example, in my diary or mobile phone)

I will **put stickers**
(for example, on my mirror or shower)

Act

Decide what you will do **if you find a change in your breast**

If I find a change in my breasts I will:

.....

Decide what you will say to the doctor

I will tell or ask my doctor:

.....

.....

Your health is important to you and others

You may have other things to think about or family to look after, but it is important to see your doctor within a week if you notice any changes in your breasts.

The change in your breast may not be causing a problem at the moment, but if it is left it could become serious.

Early detection means best protection

Think about what your family would want you to do

“I noticed a rash around my nipple so I told my daughter.

She suggested I make an appointment to see my doctor and said that she’d go with me. I was glad I told her”

(Irene, 75 years old)



What should I do if I find a change in my breast?

Act

Arrange to see your doctor **as soon as possible**.

You should ask for the **earliest** appointment possible and certainly **within a week**.



- Tell the receptionist you have found a change in your breast.
- Ask to see a different doctor if your usual doctor is not available.

Seeing your doctor

Your doctor will want to see you

If you are worried, that is reason enough to go to your doctor.

“To be honest I wasn’t sure what I’d found but I went to my doctor and she was so friendly and said I’d done the right thing by going to her.”

(Barbara, 74 years old)

Being examined is quick and easy

Remember, doctors are used to examining women and you can ask to see a female doctor.

“I get embarrassed, you know, showing yourself like that. My doctor is a young man. But he told me to relax and it was so quick that I didn’t mind at all.”

(Pat, 72 years old)

Treatments are getting better all the time

Treatment for breast cancer does not always involve major surgery.

“I was terrified of having a mastectomy so I put it off. But I shouldn’t have done. As it turned out it was cancer but they took the lump out and I didn’t lose my breast.”

(Mary, 70 years old)

Breast Screening Unit contact details:

Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

(also covering South Eastern HSC Trust)
The Screening Centre
12-22 Linenhall Street
Belfast BT2 8BS
Tel: 028 9033 3700

Northern Health and Social Care Trust

Northern Area Breast Screening
and Assessment Unit
Level A, Antrim Area Hospital
45 Bush Road, Antrim BT41 2RL
Tel: 028 9442 4425

Southern Health and Social Care Trust

The Breast Screening Unit
Flat F, The Maples
Craigavon Area Hospital
Lurgan Road, Portadown BT63 5QQ
Tel: 028 3839 7020

Western Health and Social Care Trust

The Breast Screening Unit
Ground Floor, The Nurses' Home
Altnagelvin Area Hospital
Glenshane Road, Londonderry
BT47 6SB
Tel: 028 7161 1443



Public Health Agency

12-22 Linenhall Street, Belfast BT2 8BS.
Tel: 0300 555 0114 (local rate).
www.publichealth.hscni.net
www.cancerscreening.hscni.net
www.becancerawareni.info/breast-cancer



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