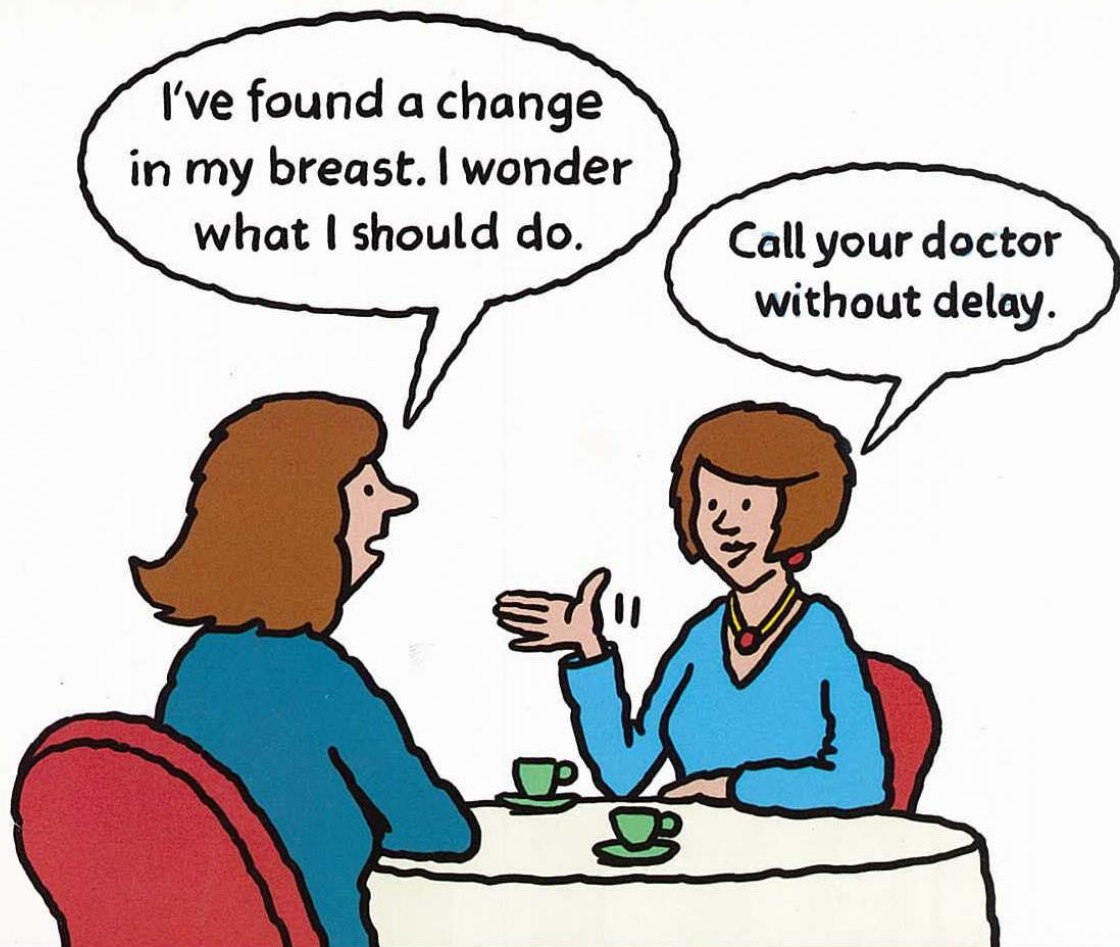
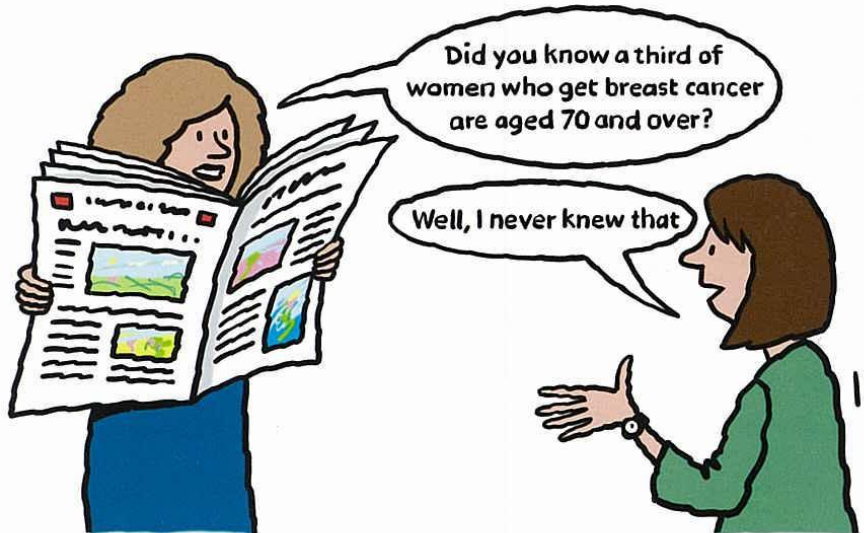


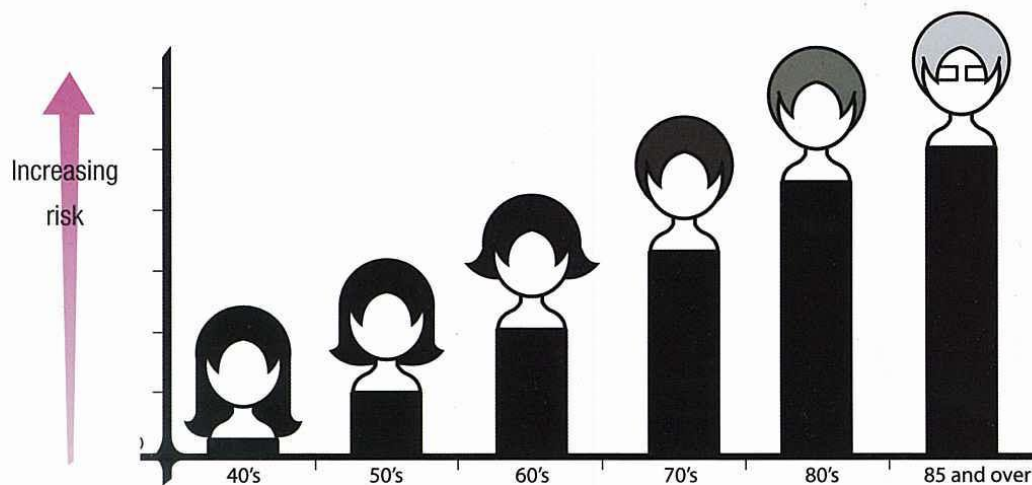
Looking after your breasts



What are my chances of getting breast cancer?



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



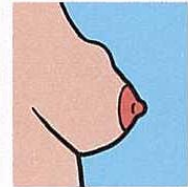
If you find a change, go and see your doctor. It may not be breast cancer. But if it is, going to see your doctor as soon as possible makes it more treatable and may save your life.

What changes should I look for in my breasts?

You should look for any new change in your breast

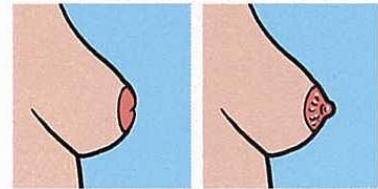
A lump

- A lump or thickening in one of your breasts or armpit



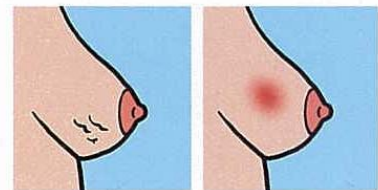
Nipple changes

- A change in the size, shape or position of your nipple
- Your nipple becoming pulled in
- A rash around your nipple
- Discharge or bleeding coming from your nipple



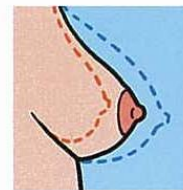
Skin changes

- Puckering or dimpling of your breast skin
- Redness of your breast skin



Changes to the whole breast

- A change in the shape or size of your breasts



Pain

- Pain or discomfort in your breast or armpit



How do I look and feel for

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.



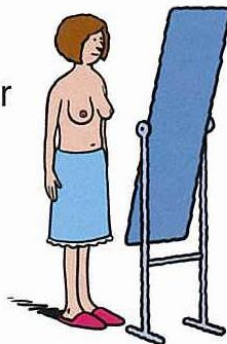
Look and feel

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

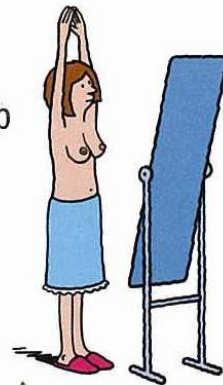
You can follow these easy steps.

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.

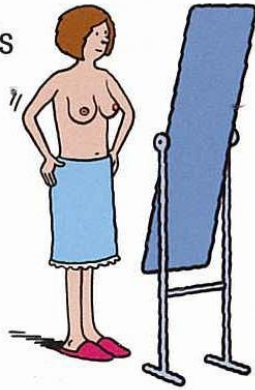


Also, it's a good idea to lift up your breasts so you can see the undersides.

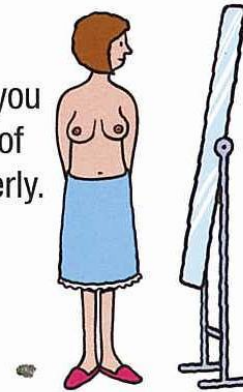


changes in my breasts?

Put your hands on your hips.



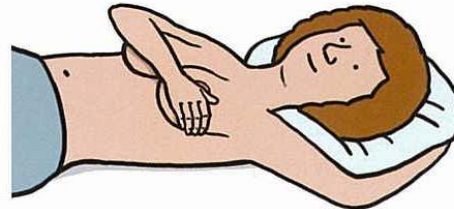
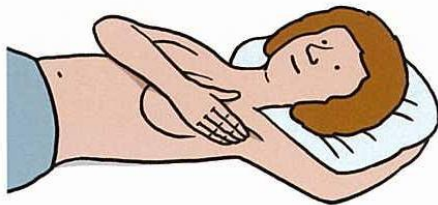
Turn your body to each side so that you can see the sides of your breasts properly.



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

When you feel your breasts, it's a good idea to keep your hand flat and your fingers straight and together (this is because prodding the breast with your fingertips might push any lump away).

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



Handy hint

Body creams, soap or shower gel will make it easier to feel your breasts properly when you are in the shower.

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**



- 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)



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 at the doctors and said that she’d go with me. I was glad I told her”

(Irene, 70 years old)



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 my 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:

.....

.....

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, 78 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)



Breast screening in older women

In Northamptonshire women over 73 aren't usually invited routinely every three years to have breast screening. Once women reach the upper age limit for routine invitations for breast screening, they are encouraged to make their own appointment. You can do this by contacting the Forest Centre direct on 01604 545830.



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