

MAKE A PLEDGE  
TAKE OUT  
5 MINUTES  
FOR YOURSELF



SHAUKAT  
KHANUM  
BREAST CANCER  
AWARENESS  
#IPledgeToCheck



Shaukat Khanum  
Memorial Cancer Hospital  
and Research Centre

## *What is Breast Cancer?*

Breast cancer is a tumour (a mass of abnormal tissue) within the breast. Most breast cancers begin in the milk ducts (intraductal cancers), however a small number starts in the milk sacs or lobes (lobular cancers).

## *What are the signs and symptoms of Breast Cancer?*

In majority of women, breast cancer is first noticed as a lump in the breast. There are however, other signs and symptoms which are important.

- 🎗 Change in shape or size of the breast
- 🎗 Change in appearance of the skin in a particular area of the breast
- 🎗 Dimpling or puckering of the skin on the breast
- 🎗 A lump or thickening inside the breast
- 🎗 Discharge from the nipple
- 🎗 Rash on the nipple or surrounding area
- 🎗 Inversion or turning in of the nipple
- 🎗 Swelling of the upper arm
- 🎗 Swelling or lump in the armpit

## *Who is at risk?*

All women are at risk of developing breast cancer. There are a number of factors that put some women at a greater risk. These are:

- 🎗 Women whose mothers, aunts or sisters have had breast cancer, have an increased risk of developing breast cancer.
- 🎗 Chances of developing breast cancer increase as women grow older.
- 🎗 Women who have already had breast cancer have a slightly higher chance of developing cancer in the

other breast.

- 🎗️ Early onset of periods (before the age of 12).
- 🎗️ Late menopause (after the age of 50).
- 🎗️ Women who have never had children and those who delay giving birth until they are over 30 as well as women who do not breastfeed.
- 🎗️ Women who are overweight.
- 🎗️ Women who have sedentary lifestyle.
- 🎗️ Cigarette smoking and alcohol has been linked with the risk of developing breast cancer.
- 🎗️ Men can rarely develop breast cancer.

## *Breast Awareness*

Being familiar with your breasts is in the interest of good health.

It is important to know how your breasts normally look and feel, so that you can detect new changes. If you notice any change in your breast appearance or consistency, you should report it to a healthcare provider right away.

If you become pregnant, you should still check your breasts regularly. Changes in size and tenderness of breasts are quite normal during pregnancy, but it is important to inform your doctor if you feel unusual changes in the breasts especially a lump, skin thickening or puckering.

## *What should you look for?*

- 🎗️ Changes in the size, outline or shape of the breast causing flattening of the skin.
- 🎗️ Dimpling, creasing or puckering of the skin.
- 🎗️ A change in direction of the nipple or if it has started to draw in.
- 🎗️ Nipple discharge (some women produce a clear or milky discharge which is normal for them).

- ⌘ New veins which stand out, particularly on one breast and not the other.
- ⌘ Any skin changes on the breast or nipple.

## *What should you feel for?*

- ⌘ Any areas of thickening.
- ⌘ Any lumps whatever their shape or form.
- ⌘ Any lumpy areas.
- ⌘ New or persistent pain or tenderness within the breasts.

Any changes you find that are new for you, must be checked by your doctor.

## *When to report to a healthcare provider?*

1. Appearance: any change in shape or outline/skin puckering
2. Feel: any pain or discomfort in breast
3. Any lump
4. Any change in nipple

## *Mammography*

Mammography is a special x-ray of the breast which gives more information about the lump.

Screening mammography is the key for early detection as it can pick up very small tumors, even before they can be felt. Diagnosing breast cancer at an early stage can help start treatment early and reduce deaths from breast cancer.

## *Screening recommendations*

Start annual screening mammogram at 40 years of age. Continue as long as a woman is in good health.

## *Where can you get help?*

If you have any queries or problems related to your health, please contact Shaukat Khanum Memorial Cancer Hospital and Research Centre.

Women are advised to use NCI website for breast cancer related patient information.

Information material on how to perform Breast Self-Examination is available on our website and also in the Hospital.

Breast Cancer is the most common cancer in women, worldwide. Pakistan has one of the highest incidences of breast cancer in Asia. You can detect breast cancer in time and start appropriate treatment.

- 🎀 Women under the age of 40 should carry out monthly self-examination.
- 🎀 Women over the age of 40 should get yearly mammography screening.

Prevention may not be in your hands, early detection is.



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