

## Know Your Breasts

- **Get help.** Ask your doctor to help you check your breasts. Notice what your breasts normally feel like.
- **Be patient.** Don't expect to be an expert right away. It can take weeks or months to get to know your breasts.
- **Check your breasts at the same time every month.** Check after your period. Check on the first day of the month if you don't have periods.
- **You might feel nervous at first.** This is normal. It gets easier.



I know what my breasts normally feel like.  
It will be easier to notice any changes.

## 5 Good Reasons to Check Your Breasts

1. You learn what your breasts normally feel like.
2. You can find a change early, sometimes before your doctor.
3. It's quick, easy and free.
4. You can do it at home.
5. Your breasts get checked 12 times in a year.

Most breast lumps that occur before menopause are not cancer. Many are due to normal changes of the menstrual cycle.

### See Your Doctor if:

- You find a lump, skin change or other change you're worried about.
- You find a new lump that doesn't go away by your next period.
- You find a new lump after menopause.

County of Riverside  
Family Planning  
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Title No. 234

# Breast Self-Exam





# What Is Breast Self-Exam?

Breast self-exam is a way you can check your breasts for any signs that could mean cancer.

- It's quick and easy to do.
- You only need about 10 minutes to do it.
- You do it once a month.

Breast self-exam, together with regular mammograms and breast exams by your doctor, is the best way to find a lump early.

When breast cancer is found early it's easier to treat and cure.

## 3 Steps to Healthy Breasts

### 1. Have regular mammograms.

Ask your doctor how often you should have one.

**2. Have regular breast exams by your doctor.** Go every 1 to 3 years before age 40. Go every year after age 40.

### 3. Know your own breasts.

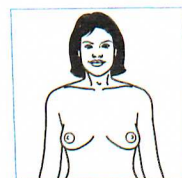
Learn what's normal for you. Check once every month for changes.

# How to Check Your Breasts

## How Do Your Breasts Look?

**Stand in front of a mirror** with your arms at your sides and look at your breasts.

- Has the size or shape changed?
- Is there any dimpling or puckering?
- Has the color of the skin or nipples changed?
- Do you have sores, scaly skin, itching or swelling on or around the nipple?
- Do you have a discharge from either nipple without squeezing?



Stand in front of a mirror with arms at your sides.



Check again with arms above your head.



Check again with hands on hips, bending forward slightly.

**See your doctor if you answer yes to any of these questions.**

## How Do Your Breasts Feel?

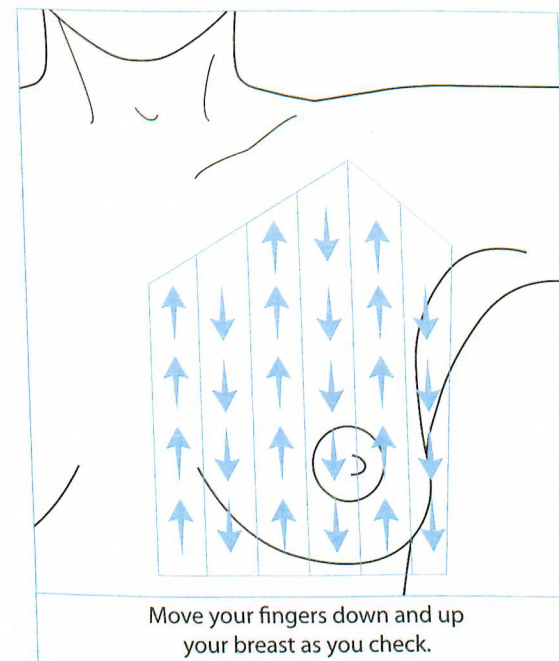
**Check standing up.** (Some women do this in a soapy shower.)

- Put one hand behind your head.
- Check your left breast with your right hand. Check your right breast with your left hand.
- Pretend there are straight lines on your breast.
- Use the flat ends of 3 or 4 fingers. Feel your breasts a little at a time, in small, dime-size circles.
- Move your fingers down along a straight line from right under your arm to the bottom of your breast.
- Move your fingers up the next line until you get to the top.

### Keep going.

- Repeat until you've checked your whole breast.
- Repeat on your other breast.

**Check again lying down.** Put a pillow under the shoulder of the breast you're checking.



Move your fingers down and up your breast as you check.

Discuss any lump or change with a health care provider.