



# Org Meyer Voortrekkers

Breast Cancer Awareness Project



# 1. Guidelines for breast self-examination / breast self-awareness

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- In a South African context, there is also debate among medical experts about the value of formal breast self-examinations for early detection of breast cancer and increasing survival rates. Research has shown that regular breast self-examinations do not significantly affect breast cancer survival rates and may even cause harm by causing unnecessary biopsies.
- Some experts recommend that people focus on "breast self-awareness" rather than regular formal breast self-examinations. Breast self-awareness means knowing what your breasts normally look and feel like, so that you can spot changes. Others, however, believe that a step-by-step breast self-examination is still valuable as part of a broader breast cancer screening strategy. Approximately 25% of breast cancers are discovered by women themselves



## 2. Breast self-examination and breast cancer screening

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- Remember, breast self-examination or awareness does not replace other breast cancer screening techniques. It should always be used in conjunction with:
  - Regular physical examinations by a doctor
  - Mammography
  - Ultrasound, MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging), or both when needed
- Talk to your healthcare provider about a breast cancer screening strategy that makes sense for your unique situation and risk factors.
- It is recommended that all women be evaluated by a doctor for increased risk(s) by age 25.



# 3. How to do a breast self-examination

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## Five Steps to Checking Your Breasts at Home

- While it's not necessary to do a formal, five-step breast exam, it can be an easy way to ensure you cover everything. Here are the traditional steps for an exam, but you can find your own way that works for you.
- Remember – Do it +/- 1 time per month – preferably 7 days after your menstrual cycle.



# Step 1: Look at your breasts in a mirror with your hands on your hips

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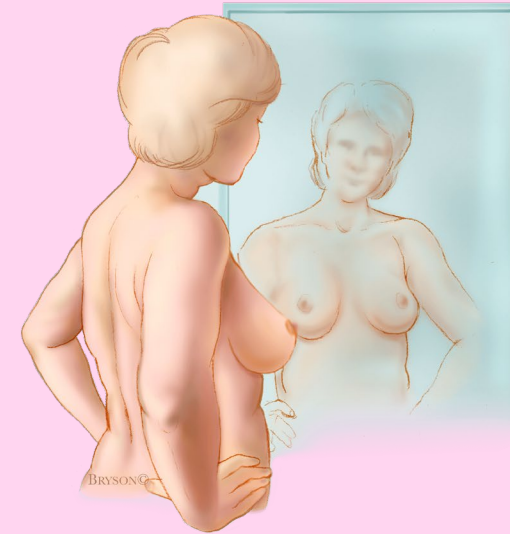
Look at your breasts in the mirror with your shoulders straight and hands on your hips.

Look for:

- Breasts that are their normal size, shape, and color
- Breasts that are evenly shaped with no obvious deformity or swelling

Watch out and see your doctor if you notice the following:

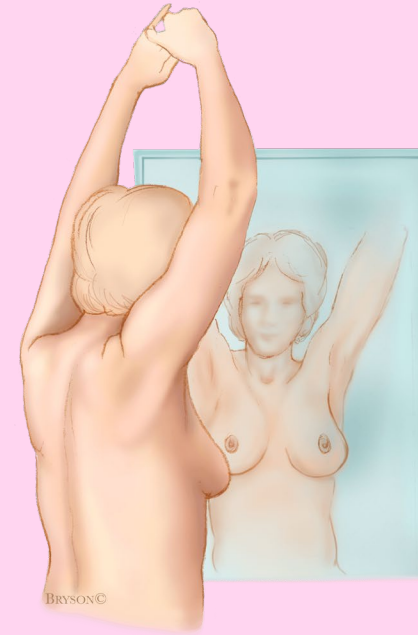
- Dimpling, wrinkling, or protruding skin
- A nipple that has changed position or is inverted
- Redness, soreness, rash, or swelling



## Step 2: Raise your arms and examine your breasts

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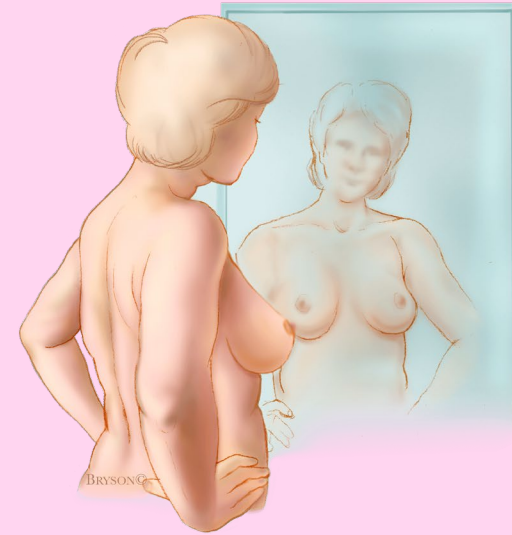
Now raise your arms and see if you notice the same changes.



## Step 3: Look for signs of fluid coming from the nipples

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While still looking in the mirror, look for any signs of fluid coming from one or both nipples (it may be watery, milky, yellow, or bloody).



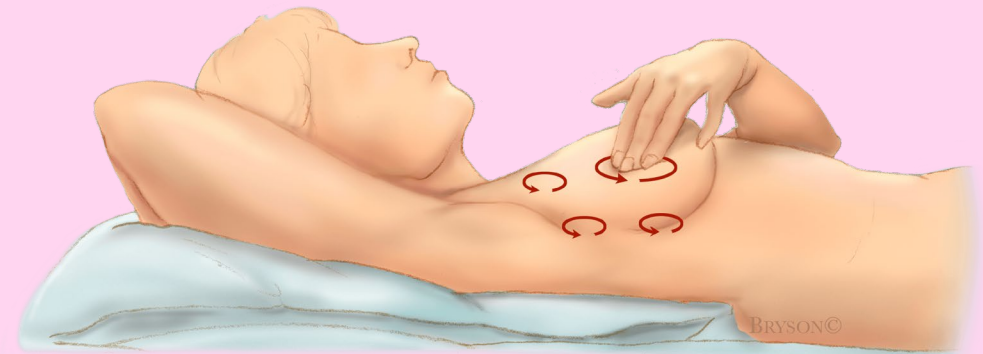
## Step 4: Feel for lumps while lying down

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Feel for any lumps or abnormalities while lying down.

Use your right hand to feel your left breast and your left hand to feel your right breast.

Move your fingers in a circular motion, covering the entire breast from top to bottom and side to side.



## Step 5: Feel your breasts for lumps while standing or sitting

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Finally, feel your breasts while standing or sitting.

Many women find it easier to do this in the shower when their skin is wet and smooth.



## 4. What should you do if you notice a lump or change?

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Don't panic.

Most women have lumps in their breasts regularly, and most breast lumps are non-cancerous.

However, if you notice a change that doesn't go away, contact your doctor.

If you are menstruating, wait 7 days to see if the change goes away.



## 5. How to develop breast self-awareness

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The more you examine your breasts, the easier it will be to notice changes.

Do this a few days (+/- 7 days) after your period, or choose a day that is easy to remember if you no longer menstruate.

Pay attention to different textures in your breasts and be aware of any procedures/activities & medications that may affect your breasts.



## 6. Breast screenings for trans and non-binary people

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- Transgender men and women who have breast tissue may have an increased risk of breast cancer.
- Transgender men who have undergone breast masculinizing surgery are still at risk of breast cancer, as not all breast tissue is removed.
- It is therefore important to be aware of any changes in the breast area and to discuss a screening plan with a doctor.



## 7. What is a Male Breast Self-Examination (MBSE)?

- A breast self-examination involves examining each breast, one at a time, using the pads of your fingers to feel for any lumps, bumps, or changes in the breast tissue.
- This includes looking for changes in size, shape, or texture of the skin, and checking for any discharge from the nipples.
- Use the same instructions as mentioned for a woman.



# Risk factors

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- Radiation therapy treatment to your breast or chest.
- A disease linked to high estrogen levels in the body, such as cirrhosis (liver disease) or Klinefelter syndrome (genetic disorder).
- One or more family members who have had breast, colon, pancreatic, ovarian or prostate cancer.
- Gene mutations such as BRCA1 / BRCA2.



# ***THANK YOU VERY MUCH – PLEASE SHARE***

- Please share this document with everyone you know.
- Remember - Every year we hold the Pink-Painted where we want to see as many women as possible challenge the men in their lives to paint their nails pink – Please see our website for more information.

[CLICK HERE FOR THE WEBSITE](#)

