



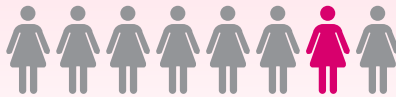
Breast Health Guide

Table of Contents

Caring for Your Breast Health.....	4
A Combined Approach to Breast Health.....	4
Risk Factors You Cannot Change	5
Risk Factors You Can Control	6
Breast Self-Awareness	9
Clinical Breast Exam	9
Common Breast Symptoms and Conditions	10
Mammogram	11
Other Screening Tests	12
Edith Sanford Breast Health Centers	12

Caring for Your Breast Health

Good health takes effort, this includes eating right, exercising, learning to manage stress, and getting routine checkups with your provider. As a woman, breast health is also an important part of caring for yourself. Breast cancer affects many women. The purpose of this guide is to help you learn how to reduce your risk and find breast cancer early.



One in eight women
will get breast cancer in her lifetime.

A Combined Approach to Breast Health

Edith Sanford Breast Centers have a combined approach to breast health. You and your provider will talk about the best way to keep your breasts healthy. These tips can help you care for your breast health.

- Know your cancer risk factors – certain things in your life or health can increase your chance of getting breast cancer; some you can change, some you cannot.
- Reduce risk factors with healthy lifestyle choices.
- Know how your breasts look and feel. Learn what is normal for you.
- Have clinical breast exams at your routine check-ups.
- Talk with your provider about your personal risk factors for breast cancer.
 - Women should have a screening mammogram every year starting at age 40.
 - Women at higher risk may need to start screening at an earlier age or have additional tests.

Risk Factors You Cannot Change

Being a Woman

Men can get breast cancer, but 99 out of 100 people who have breast cancer are women. Transgender people should speak with their provider or visit an Edith Sanford Breast Center to learn if they are at increased risk of breast cancer. Hormone therapy may affect your risk of developing cancer.

Getting Older

Your risk of getting breast cancer is greater as you get older. Most breast cancer is found in women over 50 years of age.

Family History or Genetic Changes

Your chance of getting breast cancer is greater if your mother, sister, or daughter had it. Inherited changes in certain genes (BRCA1, BRCA2, and others) increase the risk. Your provider may talk to you about seeing a genetic counselor to learn if genetic testing is right for you.

Personal Breast History

If you have had breast cancer before, you are more likely to have breast cancer again. Having dense breast tissue or non-cancer breast conditions that cause extra cell growth in the ducts or lobules of your breast increases your risk of developing breast cancer.

Menstrual and Pregnancy History

Women who started having periods before age 12 or who went through menopause after age 55 have an increased risk of breast cancer. Women who had their first full-term pregnancy after age 30 or who never had a full-term pregnancy are also at an increased risk.

Radiation Therapy

Women who have had radiation therapy to their chest or breasts before age 30 are at an increased risk for breast cancer.

Risk Factors You Can Control

Eating healthy, exercising, limiting alcohol, maintaining a healthy weight, and avoiding hormone replacement therapy can reduce your risk for breast cancer and other health problems.

Healthy Eating Tips

- Aim to eat a plant-based diet, high in fiber and nutrients.
 - Try to make two-thirds of every meal vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and legumes
 - Plant foods are high in fiber and nutrients, and can help you feel full with fewer calories.
- Choose whole foods.
 - Eat foods and drink beverages that are less processed, with few or no added ingredients
 - Drink more water
 - Limit dining out and fast foods
 - Read food labels and choose products with less added sugars
 - Avoid sugary beverages such as soda, tea, coffee, and juice
- Balance your meals with lean protein.
 - Choose healthier protein options such as:
 - Skinless chicken or turkey
 - Fish (include 2 servings each week)
 - Eggs
 - Plant proteins like beans, lentils, soy, quinoa, nuts, and seeds
 - Limit red meats and processed meats such as bacon, deli meat, and hot dogs

- Choose healthy fats.
 - Choose fat-free or low-fat dairy foods
 - Limit butter and cream
 - Bake, broil, or steam foods instead of frying
 - Use healthy oils such as olive, canola, or avocado oil
 - Include foods high in omega-3 such as fish, walnuts, chia, and flaxseeds
- Pay attention to hunger and fullness cues.
- Consider these cancer-protective diets:
 - Mediterranean Diet
 - DASH diet
 - MIND diet
 - Diet recommendations from the American Cancer Society and the American Institute for Cancer Research

Exercise

You should spend less time sitting and get at least 150 minutes of physical activity every week. Exercise may reduce breast cancer risk.

Tips for starting an exercise routine:

- Start slowly. Walking 1 mile a day for 20 minutes is a great way to get started. You can add more activity as you are able to avoid injury.
- Keep trying different forms of exercise until you find 1 or more that you enjoy.
- Find a workout buddy. When you agree to work out with another person, you are more likely to follow through.
- Add activity to your day when you can.
 - Set a timer and move for 3 minutes every hour.
 - Walk to your coworker's office instead of sending an email.
 - Clean your house with energy.
 - Park your car at the end of a parking lot to increase your steps.

If You Are Overweight

Women who are overweight may have a higher risk for breast cancer. To reduce this risk, start adding healthy habits for gradual weight loss and a healthier life.

To get started, it is helpful to choose 1 healthy eating or physical activity goal. Once that goal is part of your everyday routine, you can choose another healthy habit to add. Talk to your provider first if you have any health concerns or questions.

Alcohol Intake

Drinking alcohol increases your risk of breast cancer, it's safest to avoid it. If you do choose to drink, limit your intake to no more than 3 drinks each week. 1 drink is equal to:

- 12 ounces of beer
- 4 ounces of wine
- 1 to 1.5 ounces of distilled alcohol (such as vodka, gin, or other hard liquor)

Hormone Therapy for Menopause

Women who use combined estrogen and progestin treatment for menopause for more than 5 years have an increased chance of breast cancer. Your provider will talk to you about the risks and benefits of hormones and if there are other treatments you can try.

Tobacco and Nicotine Use

Smoking, vaping, nicotine products, and second hand smoke have been linked to a higher risk of breast cancer. Products that are labeled as Tobacco Free Nicotine (TFN) are made of chemicals rather than tobacco. These are **not** safe replacements and are also very addictive. Tobacco use also increases the risk of dying from breast cancer. Talk with your provider to get help to stop using tobacco. You may also contact smokefree.gov or call (800) 784-8669 (800-QUITNOW).

Breast Self-Awareness

It is important to know how your breasts normally look and feel to help you notice any changes. Often breast changes are not cancer, but need to be checked.

Call your provider if there are changes in your breasts such as:

- Lump in the breast or armpit
- Change in color, shape, or size of the breast
- Swelling or thickening of the breast
- Skin changes, such as dimpling or puckering
- Pain, redness, or soreness in the breast or nipple that does not go away or gets worse
- Fluid, other than breast milk, leaking from the nipple

Clinical Breast Exam

A breast exam is part of a routine checkup by your provider. The provider will carefully look at your breasts. The provider will also feel your breasts and under arms for lumps or anything else that does not seem normal. When you need to have a breast exam may depend on your age, health, or family history. Talk to your provider about how often to have a breast exam.



Common Breast Symptoms and Conditions

Most women have breast changes at some time in their lives. Your age, hormone levels, and medications may cause lumps, bumps, or discharge. Minor and serious breast problems have similar symptoms. Although many women fear cancer, most breast problems are not cancer.

Common Breast Symptoms

- **Nipple discharge** – when not breastfeeding; this can be normal, but have it checked by your provider
- **Breast pain** – most often not cancer, check with your provider if you:
 - Also have a lump or other changes in your breast
 - Have pain that does not go away or occurs for more than 6 weeks in the same area of your breast
- **Mass** – breast lump or area in the breast that feels different from the rest of the breast tissue

Common Breast Changes

- **Fibrocystic breast changes** – lumpiness, thickening, and swelling; often just before your period
- **Cysts** – fluid-filled lumps that may be tender
- **Fibroadenomas** – solid, round, rubbery lumps that move easily when pushed; found most often in younger women
- **Intraductal papillomas** – non-cancerous, wart-like tumors that grow inside the milk ducts
- **Blocked milk ducts** – occurs when breast milk gets stuck and cannot flow out of the breast
- **Breast infection (mastitis)** – causes swelling, pain, and fever; most often happens while breastfeeding, but can happen when you are not pregnant or breastfeeding
- **Pseudoangiomatous stromal hyperplasia (PASH)** – a common non-cancerous mass

Mammogram

A mammogram is an x-ray exam that takes pictures of the breast. It can be used to check for breast cancer when you have no signs of the disease (screening mammogram). It can also be used if you have a lump or other sign of breast problems (diagnostic mammogram).

During your test:

- You will need to undress from the waist up.
- The technologist will position your breast to get the best image.
- Each of your breasts will be compressed, 1 at a time. This helps get the most complete x-ray image.

When making your appointment, tell the breast center if:

- **You have noticed any changes in your breast.**
- **It is hard for you to stand.** We will arrange for you to sit during your mammogram.
- **You have breast implants.** You should continue to have mammograms, but implants can hide some breast issues.
- **You are breastfeeding, pregnant, or may be pregnant.**

Have your screening mammograms every year, or when recommended by your provider.

Tips for Your Mammogram

- Schedule your mammogram for right after your period when your breasts are less tender.
- Wear a shirt with shorts, pants, or a skirt that you can leave on when you undress from the waist up.
- On the day of your test, wash your breasts and underarms. Do **not** use deodorant, powder, cream, lotion, or perfume. They can cause shadows on the mammogram.
- Tell the mammogram technologist about any skin tags, scars, or moles you have in the area of your breasts.

Other Screening Tests

Your provider may suggest other breast cancer screening tests based on your history. These may include:

- **Breast ultrasound** – Sound waves create a picture of the breast tissue. It is used to learn more about a breast problem that was found on a mammogram or during a breast exam.
- **Breast MRI** – A strong magnet, radio waves, and a computer create detailed pictures of the breast tissue. Contrast medicine (a special dye) is given through an IV to help see more details in the breast tissue. It may be used for women who are at high risk for breast cancer.
- **Contrast Enhanced Mammography (CEM)**. IV contrast medicine is given before a mammogram to make it easier to see more details of the breast tissue. This test may be used for women who have a breast problem that was found on a mammogram, have symptoms, or are at high risk for breast cancer.

Edith Sanford Breast Health Centers

If you are 40 years old or older and due for a breast cancer screening, schedule a mammogram through My Sanford Chart or by calling your provider's clinic.

If you are under 40 years old but have symptoms or a family history of breast cancer, talk to your provider about getting screened earlier or call (855) 353-3484 (855-35-EDITH).

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Always follow your health care provider's instructions.

