

## What to do if you find a lump or change in your breasts?

If you find a lump or change in your breast, stop and examine the opposite breast in the same area. If you find something similar, it is probably a normal change. If you see a change doing your visual exam, but cannot feel any lump, contact your doctor for an evaluation.

### *Remember:*

80% of lumps are not cancerous. However, any lump or change needs to be checked by your family doctor.

Some women may choose not to do breast self examination as it may cause a lot of worry, frequent visits to the family doctor and unnecessary biopsies.

## When should I do BSE?

Check your breasts when they are least tender.

- Women who have regular monthly periods should examine their breasts the last day of their period or several days after.
- Menopausal or change of life, (when your monthly periods have stopped) should select the same day of each month.
- Breast-feeding mothers should examine their breasts after feeding the baby. This sometimes requires that only one breast can be checked at a time because all the milk cannot be expressed completely from both breasts.



## Your Breast Health Plan

- Be aware of how your breasts normally look and feel.
- Become informed about the benefits and harms of screening, talk to your doctor.
- If you decide to participate in breast screening, have a regular screening mammogram.
- Remember to keep a check on your breasts regularly between screening visits.
- Promptly report any breast changes or concerns to your family doctor.
- Keep yourself healthy, maintain a healthy diet and body weight.
- Exercise regularly.
- Limit alcohol.
- Do not smoke.

The Breast Screening Program offers screening mammograms and information on breast health.

### *Make Time for Yourself Today!*

*Breast Screening is a program within the Newfoundland and Labrador Cancer Care Registry. Newfoundland and Labrador's Personal Health Information Act governs the cancer care registry and directs how the registry can collect, use and share your personal health information. This information is needed to support and provide the best health care possible. If you have any questions or concerns about why or how the information is collected, used or shared, please contact the program office at 1-800-414-3443.*

## Breast Self Examination

## Breast Screening Program

NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

## What is Breast Self Examination (BSE)?

It's a way of using your eyes and hands to learn to identify your normal breast tissue. Knowing how your breasts normally look and feel will make it easier for you to notice any early changes.

## Who is at risk for developing breast cancer?

Every woman is at risk. Your risk increases as you get older, even if you don't have a family history of breast cancer.

## How do I do BSE?

Use the flats/pads of your three middle fingers. Do not use your finger tips.



Place your hand in a flat, bowing position on your breast.

Three levels of pressure will be used to make three small dime sized circles on your breast.

1. **Light pressure** - barely moves the top of skin.
2. **Medium pressure** - goes halfway through the thickness of breast tissue.
3. **Deep pressure** - goes to the base of the breast. Do not lift your hand or decrease the pressure as you make these three circles.

## Three steps to BSE

*Step*

1

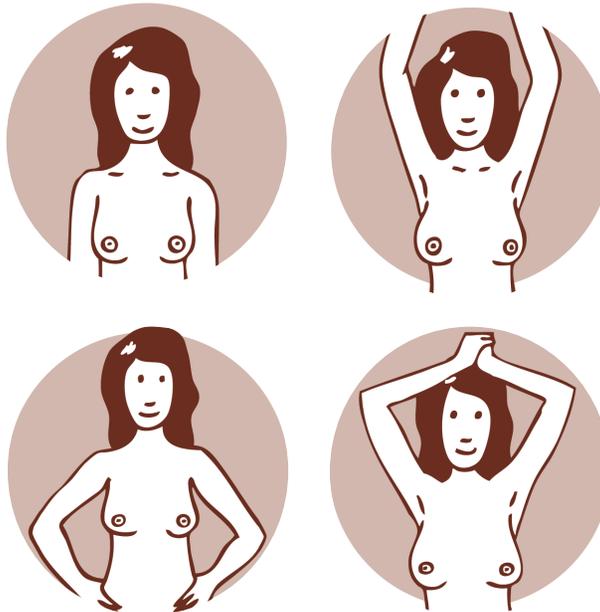
While you are in the shower or bath, soap your hands. Using the correct finger position, feel each breast with your opposite hand. Keep the arm of the breast you are examining over your head and using the opposite hand, feel the breast with a wide sweeping motion. You are feeling for any obvious lumps or changes.

Check under your arm. Relax your arm by your side, slide your opposite hand up into the armpit, and make the same circles. Feel for any lumps.

*Step*

2

While standing in front of a mirror, look at your breasts in the following positions turning right and left.



Look for any changes in your breasts such as:

- Changes in the outline or shape of each breast
- Dimpling or puckering of the skin
- Redness
- Nipple leakage or discharge or change in shape
- Bleeding, reddish areas or rash around the nipple that doesn't heal
- Lumps or swelling

*Step*

3

While lying down to examine your right breast, put your right hand behind your head. If your breasts are large, place a pillow under your right shoulder to flatten your breast. Place your left hand in a flat bowing position on your breast. Your smallest finger will extend upward when you have the correct position.



The Grid Method

Starting just under your collarbone, next to your shoulder, press down on your right breast with your left hand. Moving in small circles with the three levels of pressure, move your left hand across your chest ½ inch at a time until you get to the middle of your chest bone. Move down one finger width and complete the next row, moving in the opposite direction across your chest. Continue until the entire area is examined.

Do not skip over the nipple. Using the same pattern examine the nipple area in the same way with the three levels of pressure.

Repeat in the same way for your left breast with your left hand behind your head and examine with your right hand.