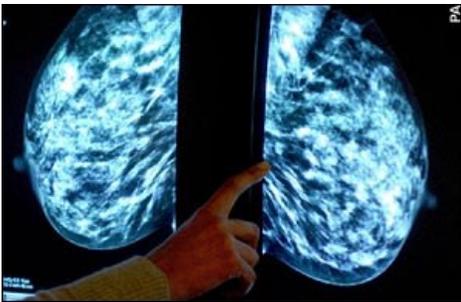


## Breast Screening

Women aged 50-70 who are registered with a GP are invited by the NHS to have their breasts screened every three years. Screening involves taking an x-ray of the breast, called a mammogram. The mammogram is then studied for any abnormalities.



Mammograms are taken by a female healthcare professional, and the aim is to find abnormalities that are too small to be felt.

Screening is estimated to save around 1,300 lives every year. Around a third of all breast cancers are diagnosed by screening.

You may be eligible for screening before you're 50 if there's a family history of breast cancer.

This checking your breasts leaflet is part of a wider range of health and wellbeing information from DISC.

Ask your Support Worker if there are any more health and wellbeing issues that you would like to receive information about.



Health and Wellbeing



## Checking your Breasts



## Why Check Your Breasts?

Breast cancer is the most common cancer in the UK and affects about 48,000 women every year. 80% of women affected by breast cancer are over 50, but it does affect younger women. Men can also get breast cancer, although this is quite rare.

Knowing what your breasts look and feel like can help you spot any changes, so it is important to check them regularly.



Not all changes in your breasts are something to be worried about—their look or feel may change throughout your menstrual cycle, during/ after pregnancy, or the menopause. It is important to get to know how your breasts look and feel at different times of the month so that you can spot any abnormal changes.

## How to Check your Breasts

In the shower—using the pads of your fingers, move around your breast in a circular pattern from the outside to the centre, check the breast and armpit area. Check both breasts each month for any lumps, thickening, or hardened knots.

In front of a mirror—look at your breasts with your arms at your sides. Next, raise your arms over your head and look for changes in shape, swelling, dimpling of the skin, or changes in the nipples. Next, rest your palms on your hips and press to flex your chest muscles. Left and right breasts will not exactly match (few women's breasts do), so look for changes, particularly on one side.

Lying down—Place a pillow under your right shoulder and your right arm behind your head. Using your left hand, move the pads of your fingers around your right breast in small circular motions covering the breast area and armpit. Use light, medium, and firm pressure. Squeeze the nipple; check for discharge and lumps. Repeat for your left breast.

## Changes in the Breast

Once you've checked your breasts, did you notice any of the following?

- *Changes in the outline or shape of the breast, especially those caused by arm movements or lifting the breast*
- *Changes in the look or feel of the skin, such as puckering or dimpling*
- *Discomfort/ pain in one breast that is unusual, particularly if it is new and persistent*
- *Any new lumps, thickening or bumpy areas in one breast or armpit, which differs from the same part of the other side*
- *Nipple discharge that's new for you and not milky*
- *Bleeding from the nipple*
- *Moist, red areas on the nipple that don't heal easily*
- *Any change in nipple position, such as pulled up or pointing differently*
- *A rash on or around the nipple*

If you answered yes to any of these, see your GP.