

## Why You Should Examine Your Breasts Monthly:

If breast cancer is found early and treated right away, you have a great chance for cure. So, it is very important to do breast self-exam (BSE) every month.

## When to Examine Your Breasts:

Examine your breasts the same way once a month, about a week after you get your period, when your breasts are not tender and swollen. After menopause, check your breasts on the first day of every month. If you have had a hysterectomy, check with your doctor first about choosing the right day of the month.

## ALL WOMEN ARE AT RISK!

Your risk may be higher if you:

- are older than 50.
- have a mother or sister who has had breast cancer.
- have had breast cancer before.
- started menopause when you were older.
- started having your periods when you were younger than 12 years old.
- have had your first baby after 30.
- are overweight.

## 3 Steps Against Breast cancer:

1. Have a mammogram every year.
2. Have a clinical breast exam by a doctor or health care worker every year.
3. Do a breast self-exam once a month.

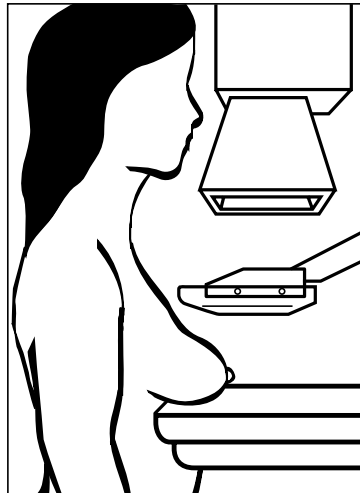
## What You Should Do If You Find a Lump or Thickening:

If you find a lump or thick spot during your breast self-exam, it is very important to see your doctor. Don't be afraid. Most lumps or changes are not cancer.

## Why You Should Have a Mammogram:

A mammogram is a breast x-ray. It can find cancer when it is too small to be felt by your hand. A mammogram is one of the most important ways to find breast cancer early. Have your first mammogram when you are 40 years old. Have a mammogram every year after that.

### Getting a Mammogram



**Original text by:**  
Niccu Tafarrodi, Ph.D.  
Donald Whipple Fox

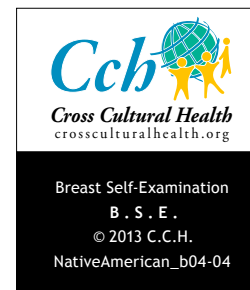
**Edited by:**  
Katherine Levin  
*Multicultural Committee Volunteer*  
Rosemary Park  
*University of Minnesota, Professor*

**Illustrations by:**  
Nickdokht Torkzadeh



# How to examine your breasts

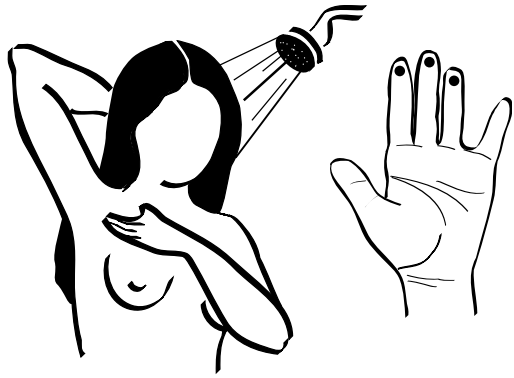
**3** simple ways you can save your life by finding breast cancer early.



*This booklet was created in partnership with the American Cancer Society.*  
1-800-ACS-2345  
[www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)



# 1 In the Shower:



Your hands will be wet and it will be easier to move them over your skin. With the pads of your fingers (not your fingertips), move firmly over every part of each breast.

Use your right hand to examine your left breast. Use your left hand to examine your right breast.

## What Do I Look for?

Look for any hard lump or thickening.

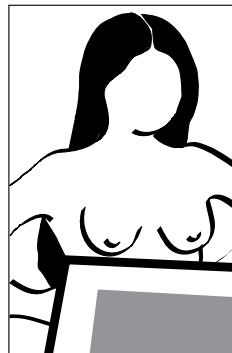
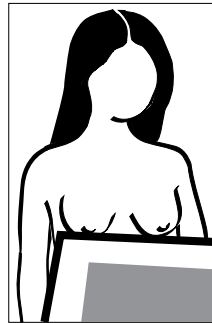
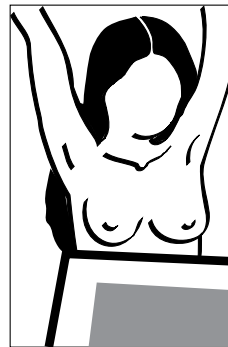
# 2 In Front of a Mirror:

Place your arms down at each side. Look for changes in shape, size and dimpling of the skin. Look for changes in the nipple.

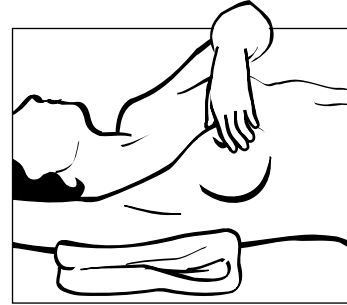
Place your arms up above the head and look for the same things.

Place your hands on your hips and lean your chest forward.

Look at your nipples to check them for discharge or skin changes.



# 3 Lying Down:



Put a pillow under the shoulder of the breast which you are going to examine. That will help spread out your breast evenly over your chest.

Use your right hand to examine your left breast. Use your left hand to examine your right breast.

## Should My Breasts Look Alike?

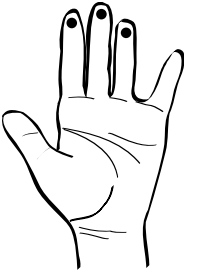
Your breasts might not look exactly the same. That is okay. You are looking for change in the size, shape, and the way your breasts look from month to month.

## Why Should I Do a Breast Exam?

By doing a breast self-exam every month, you will get to know what your breasts look like and what is normal for you. Your breasts may have some normal lumps which are always there. When you find something different than normal, then you need to talk with your doctor.

## What Part of My Finger Should I Use?

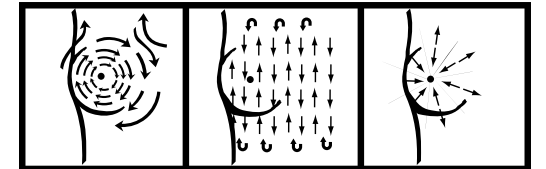
Use the flat parts of your middle 3 fingers to examine your breasts.



## What Pattern Should I Use?

Examine your entire breast. Don't forget the area by your collarbone and under your arms.

The pictures (below) show 3 patterns of breast self-exam. Choose the way which is most easy for you. Use the same pattern each time you examine your breasts.



Examine your breasts by using one of the patterns shown above.

Look at your nipples (do not squeeze). Look for discharge or skin changes. Discharge can be clear or bloody. If there is discharge, see your doctor right away.

After you have examined your right breast, examine your left breast in the same way.

Compare what you feel in one breast with what you feel in the other breast.