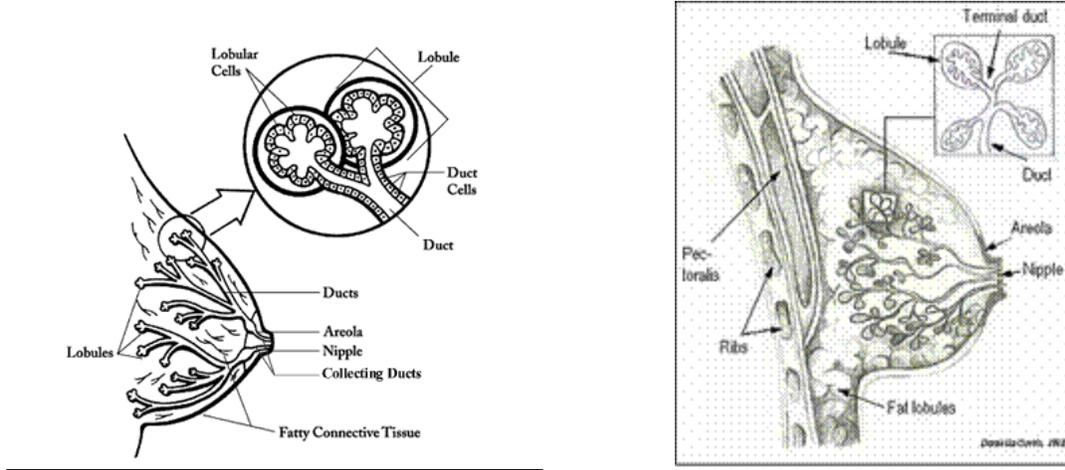


# Breast Cancer

## What is Breast Cancer?

Breast cancer occurs when cells in the breast become abnormal and divide without control, forming a growth or tumor that is malignant, spreading to other parts of the body. Breast cancer is the most common type of cancer among women. 1 out of 9 women will develop breast cancer in their lifetime.



## Risk Factors for Breast Cancer May Include:

- ✓ age (the older a woman is, the greater her risk for breast cancer),
- ✓ family history of breast cancer,
- ✓ genetic tendency,
- ✓ past breast cancer,
- ✓ early age of menstruation (before age 12),
- ✓ late menopause (after age 55),
- ✓ delayed childbearing (first child after age 30), or no child

## Symptoms of Breast Cancer May Include:

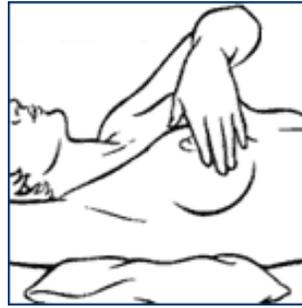
- ✓ breast changes (e.g. lumps in and around the breast, underarm area),
- ✓ a thickening in the breast,
- ✓ skin dimpling or other change in skin or nipple,
- ✓ tenderness in the nipple,
- ✓ discharge from the breasts

## How to Detect Breast Cancer:

When breast cancer is found early enough, a woman has more treatment choices and a better chance of recovery. Women should talk to their doctor about this disease, the symptoms to watch for, and a schedule of checkups.

## Mammography

Mammography is an x-ray that makes an image of the breast. The result is called a mammogram, which can detect cancer early before symptoms can be felt. Women, starting at age 40, should have a mammogram every year. Women at increased risk should ask their doctor about earlier screenings or additional tests, such as breast ultrasound or MRI.



### **Clinical Breast Exams and Breast Self-Exams**

Women should have a clinical breast exam (CBE) by a doctor or nurse, about every three years for women in their 20s and 30s and yearly for women 40 and over.

For women starting in their 20s, they can ask their doctor or nurse how to do a complete and correct breast self-exam (BSE). Regular BSEs can help you find changes in your breasts that occur between CBEs and mammograms. Although most breast changes are not cancerous, women should report any changes as soon as possible to their doctor.

#### **For more information, please contact:**

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(415) 364-7647  
[www.dph.sf.ca.us/CHPP/newcomers/newcmrs.htm](http://www.dph.sf.ca.us/CHPP/newcomers/newcmrs.htm)

Or  
American Cancer Society  
1-800-ACS-2345  
[www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)

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