



BREAST CANCER BASICS

BOOKLET SERIES 3.0

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A photograph of a woman with long dark hair, wearing a grey patterned top, hugging a young girl from behind. The girl is wearing a white long-sleeved shirt, a red tutu, white tights with small heart patterns, and gold shoes. They are standing in a brightly lit hospital hallway with a fire extinguisher visible on the wall to the left.

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WHY IS THE KNOWLEDGE OF BREAST CANCER IMPORTANT TO US?



According to estimates from the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2019, cancer is the first or second leading cause of death before the age of 70 years in 112 of 183 countries.

Female breast cancer is by far the most common cancer in women worldwide, both in the developed and developing countries.

Breast cancer occurs in every countries of the World in women at any age after puberty but with increasing rates in later life.

The Federal Ministry of Health reported breast cancer to be the first of the top five cancers of greatest burden in Nigeria.

MY HEALTHY BREASTS

The following are features of a healthy breast:

- The skin on a healthy breast is flat, even, and free of color or texture changes over time.
- A healthy breast should feel warm (but not hot) to touch, like the rest of your chest and abdomen.
- A healthy breast should have no discharge unless you're pregnant, nursing, or have recently had a baby. Your bra cups should stay clean and dry.
- Does about the same thing every day, for instance, swinging free or sitting in a bra.
- It may feel a little sore or ache especially when your period is near, due to some hormone changes.
- Armpit feels smooth



TAKE NOTE:

- Breasts are different in size, look, and feel- and that's totally normal. The key is just to know what is normal for you.
- One way to get familiar with your own 'normal' is to check your breasts in the mirror regularly.
- It is important to understand that most breast lumps are benign and not malignant (cancer).
- Breast cancer occurs in males as well (though the incidence is far higher in females). On account of this, it is important males have good knowledge of healthy breasts and breast cancer as well.

WHAT IS BREAST CANCER??

Breast cancer is a disease in which cells in the breast grow out of control.

RISK FACTORS OF BREAST CANCER

- i. Personal history of breast diseases
- ii. Family history of breast cancer
- iii. Radiation exposure
- iv. Drinking alcohol
- v. Personal history of breast cancer
- vi. Inherited genes that increase cancer risk
- vii. Obesity
- viii. Increasing age

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS



A change in the look or feel of the breast

A change in the look or feel of the nipple

Definite lump

Inverted nipples

Rashes around the nipple (similar to eczema)

New lump in the breast or underarm (armpit)

Thickening or swelling of part of the breast

Irritation or dimpling of breast skin

Redness or flaky skin in the nipple area or any other part of the breast

Pulling in of the nipple or pain in the nipple area

Nipple discharge that start suddenly other than breast milk, including blood

Any change in the size or the shape of the breast

Pain in any area of the breast

NOTE: Never ignore a change in your breast.

WHAT IS BREAST SELF-EXAMINATION?

Breast self-examination involves checking your breasts for lumps or changes.

When to perform a breast self-examination?

The best time to examine your breasts is usually about 5-7 days after your menstrual period ends, when your breasts are least likely to be swollen or tender: do it the same time every month. Examining your breasts at other times in your menstrual cycle may make it hard to compare results of one examination with another.

Steps of breast self-examination:

Breast self-examination involves 2 major steps, namely: Step 1: LOOK and Step 2: FEEL

STEP 1a (LOOK): Stand in front of a mirror and LOOK out for any changes in your breasts (colour, dimpling, rashes around the nipple, inverted nipple(s), flaky skin, visual lumps, pulling in of the nipple(s), abnormal nipple discharge etc.).

STEP 1b (LOOK): With your hands over your head, LOOK out for any changes, difference in the movement of both breasts (they should swing freely) or any undue attachment to the breast wall.

STEP 2a (FEEL): Remove all your clothes above the waist. Lie down. Lying down spreads your breast evenly over your chest and makes it easier to FEEL for lump or changes. Visually divide the breast into 4 quadrants; check your entire breast by FEELING all of the tissues from the uppermost part of the breast to the bottom of the bra line, then from the armpit to the breast bone, covering the 4 quadrants.

STEP 2b (FEEL): Use the pads of your three middle fingers – not your fingertips. With your right hand behind your head, use the middle fingers of your left hand to FEEL your right breast, checking the 4 quadrants. Thereafter, with your left hand behind your head, use middle fingers of your right hand to FEEL your left breast, checking the 4 quadrants.

STEP 2c (FEEL): Use three different levels of pressure to FEEL all your breast tissue. Light pressure is needed to FEEL the tissue close to the skin surface. Medium pressure is used to FEEL a little deeper, and firm pressure is used to FEEL the tissue close to the breastbone and ribs. Avoid lifting of fingers away from the skin as you FEEL for lumps, unusual thicknesses, or changes of any kind.

STEP 2d (FEEL): Press the nipple to check for any discharge: which may be clear, white, yellow, green, brown or bloody.

In addition to examining your breasts while lying down, you may also check them while in the shower (standing in front of a mirror, preferably). Soapy fingers slide easily across the breasts making it easier to feel changes. While standing in the shower, place one arm over your head and lightly soap your breast on that side. Then using the flat surface of your fingers, not the fingertips – gently move your hand over your breast, feeling carefully for any lumps or thickened area while standing in front of the mirror.

Should you observe, feel or suspect any lump in your breast(s), please inform your mother, or female guardian and discuss with your School Nurse.

You could also visit our Wellness Centre to speak with our Doctor.

Acknowledgement

The Breast Cancer Basics Booklet Series 3.0 is Wellness Africa Foundation's attempt at increasing knowledge on ways to promote good breast health, teach breast self-examination techniques; create awareness and educate the public on the risk factors, signs and symptoms of breast cancer.

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About Wellness Africa Foundation

Wellness Africa Foundation (WAF) is a non-governmental, non-profit organization committed to Sustainable Development Goal 3 (Good health and Wellbeing) and duly incorporated with the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) of Nigeria in May 2019. Our mission is to facilitate community health outreaches, while also promoting Adolescents & Youth Reproductive Health (A.Y.R.H.).

Through the S.M.A.R.T. (Sexual Matters of Adolescents Responsibly Taught) Programme, WAF speaks to adolescents and youth on sexual and reproductive health issues, and as well, facilitates Breast Cancer awareness outreaches to secondary schools. Annually, WAF organizes Roundtable Dialogues on health among relevant stakeholders for joined up thinking towards improving Universal Health Coverage. In line with our vision to improve health outcomes in Africa through sustainable initiatives, we have reached out to over 15,000 beneficiaries.

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- Hepatitis B
- Hepatitis C
- Urinalysis
- Blood Group
- Genotype
- Retroviral Screening
- Pregnancy test
- Syphilis test
- Malaria parasite test
- Fasting/Random Blood Sugar
- Body Composition
- Blood pressure

WELLNESS AFRICA FOUNDATION

Male & Female

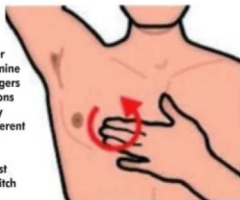
BREAST

SELF-EXAMINATION

Breast Self-Examination



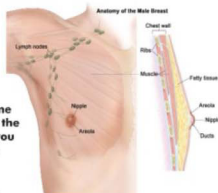
1. Lie down and put your left arm under your head. Use your right hand to examine your left breast. With your 3 middle fingers flat, move gently in small circular motions over the entire breast, checking for any lump, hard knot, or thickening. Use different levels of pressure - light, medium and firm - over each area of your breast, from your collarbone, above your breast down to the ribs below your breast. Switch arms and repeat on the other breast.



2. Look at your breast while standing in front of a mirror with your hands on your hips. Look for lumps, new differences in size and shape and swelling or dimpling of the skin

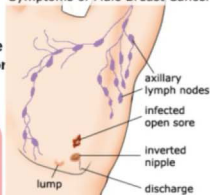


3. Raise one arm, then the other, so you can check under your arms for lumps.



4. Squeeze the nipple of each breast gently between your thumb and index finger. Report to your healthcare provider right away any discharge or fluid from the nipples or any lumps or changes in your breast

Symptoms of Male Breast Cancer



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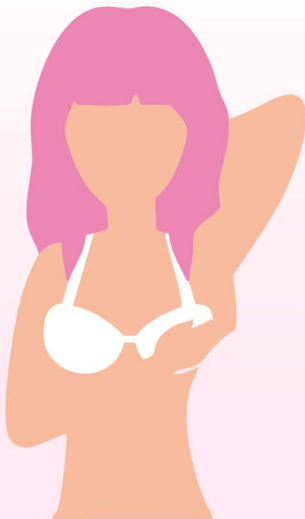
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BCASO Support

Kindly support the printing of more copies for public awareness. Thank you.

GTB | 0480873625 | Wellness Africa Foundation



The essence of this booklet is to create awareness and educate the public about breast cancer.

Remember, when in doubt about a particular lump, check your other breast. You may find the same kind of lump in the same area or another area of the other breast as well. Whether the lump is in one or both breasts, kindly tell the nurse at your school clinic; your parents or guardian.

You could also visit our Wellness Centre to see our Doctor.

