

DOs AND DON'Ts

DOs

- Protect your arm from pinpricks, scratches, bruises, cuts, or burns of any kind.
- Use an electric razor with a narrow head to shave as this decreases the risk of cuts and scratches.
- Use a thimble while stitching.
- Wear loose clothing and jewellery.
- Use insect repellent to avoid insect bites.
- In case you injure yourself, wash with an antiseptic solution and apply a sterile bandage.

DON'Ts

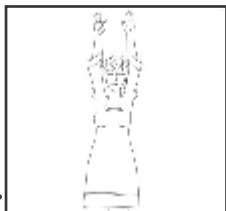
- Do not lift heavy objects with affected arms.
- Never take injections or IV fluids or check your blood pressure or draw blood on the affected arm.
- Do not wear glass bangles.
- Do not expose the arm to excessive heat while cooking.
- Do not cut or pull cuticles on the affected arm.

With a little bit of care and discipline, these precautions will become a part of your subconscious and help you to lead a normal life.

A FEW SIMPLE EXERCISES TO HELP YOU MOVE BACK TO NORMAL LIFE.



1. Sit straight in a chair or cross-legged on a bed or floor. Bring your arms in front. Join your hands and stretch.



2. Raise your arms above your head and stretch. Your upper arms should be touching your ears.



3. Bring your arms down to shoulder level with palms facing downwards.



4. Join your hands behind your back and stretch. At the same time, raise your head and take a deep breath.

Acknowledgements – Dr. Rajan Badwe,
Director, Tata Memorial Hospital and Head of the Department
Surgical Oncology.



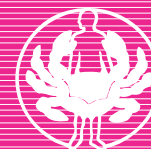
What you need to know about BREAST CANCER



Cancer Patients Aid Association

TOTAL MANAGEMENT OF CANCER

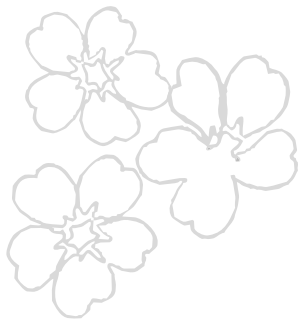
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CANCER PATIENT'S AID ASSOCIATION

Total Management of Cancer

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Breast cancer is the second most common cancer seen in women in India. The incidence of Breast cancer is on the rise. Breasts are designed to produce milk for the new born baby after the delivery. Breast is made up of milk glands and supporting breast tissue. Milk glands contain milk sacs, where milk is produced and milk ducts carry the milk to the nipples from where it is discharged. The

breast tissue extends up to the collar bone on the top and the armpits on the side. Traditionally the shape and size of the breasts are associated with femininity and any disease affecting the breasts is psychologically traumatic.

WHAT IS BREAST CANCER?

Breast cancer is a tumor (a mass of abnormal tissue) within the breast. The majority of breast cancers begin in the milk ducts, however a small number start in the milk sacs or the lobes. Like other cancers, breast cancer if unchecked also has the ability to spread to different areas. The spread occurs mainly via the lymph nodes in the armpit.

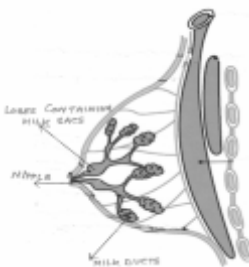


Image of a normal Breast

WHO IS AT RISK?

Breast cancer is far more common in women than in men. Some women are at particularly higher risks.

1. Age- risk of breast cancer increases with age.
2. Women who started their periods (menarche) at an early age (before 12 years).
3. Late menopause (after 50 years).
4. Delayed childbearing, women who did not breast feed their infants, or those who never had children.
5. Obesity.
6. Family history of breast cancer i.e. women whose mothers, grandmothers, aunts, or sisters have developed breast cancer, are at slightly increased risk.
7. Women who previously had breast cancer, have a slightly higher chance of having breast cancer in the other breast.
8. Diet rich in animal fat.

It is important to mention here that even if several risk factors are present, it does not necessarily mean that cancer will develop in these cases. It is equally important to mention that 50% of women who develop breast cancer have no risk factors.

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF BREAST CANCER?

In majority of women breast cancer is first noticed as a painless lump in the breast. The other important signs and symptoms are:

- A lump or thickening inside the breast tissue.
- Inversion or turning of the nipples.
- Dimpling on breast.
- Change in appearance of skin in a part of the breast.
- Rash on the nipples or surrounding areas.
- Discharge from the nipple, particularly if blood stained.
- Swelling on the upper arm.
- Swelling in the armpit.

HOW CAN BREAST CANCER BE DIAGNOSED?

Being in an area which is accessible the importance of early detection and diagnosis of breast cancer can not be overemphasized. Early detection and treatment can provide an almost 100% cure. Breast Self Examination (BSE) is important as it helps the patient detect any changes occurring in the breast by herself. All women should learn how to do a breast self examination. However, it is reassuring to note that all lumps in the breast are not cancerous, though one must check out with the doctor, when a lump is noticed.

A Mammogram is an X-Ray of the breast using a specially designed machine, and is very useful in early diagnosis. Besides BSE, every woman over 40 years must have Physical Examination of the breast done by a doctor or trained health worker as part of the annual check up programme. An annual mammogram supported by ultra-sonography is important to ensure early detection.

Following a clinical examination a Biopsy is the only definite way of confirming or ruling out breast cancer in suspected cases. A piece of breast tissue is taken for testing; this can be done by inserting a needle into the breast (FNAC- Fine Needle Aspiration Cytology) or by an operation under local or general anesthesia. A pathologist then examines the breast tissue under the microscope to check for cancer cells.

WHAT IS STAGING?

- Stage 1 - Tumor is confined to breast, tumor is less than or equal to 2 centimeters in greatest dimension.
- Stage 2 - Tumor less than 5 centimeters with positive underarm lymph nodes or Tumor is more than 2 centimeters with negative underarm lymph nodes.
- Stage 3 - Tumor is more than 5 centimeters with positive underarm lymph nodes or Tumor with extension to chest wall or skin or lymph nodes fixed to one another or internal mammary lymph nodes.
- Stage 4 - Tumor has spread to other parts of the body.

WHAT ARE THE TREATMENT OPTIONS FOR BREAST CANCER?

Surgery, Chemotherapy, Radiotherapy and Targeted therapy are the options available for treatment for breast cancer. Often the treatment given may be a combination of modalities, such as surgery followed by radiotherapy or chemotherapy followed by surgery. Selection of the appropriate therapeutic approach depends on the location and the size of the tumour, breast size, appearance in the mammogram, the extent of the change in the tissues and the preference of the patient and the treating doctor.

1. Breast Conservation Surgery is the most common curative modality of cancer treatment wherein the surgeon removes the affected tissues, such as a localized tumor and preserves breast. Mastectomy or total removal of breast tissue may be required sometime.
2. Radiotherapy involves subjecting the tumor bearing region either in part or whole to ionizing radiation using a variety of delivering systems.
3. Chemotherapy uses cytotoxic drugs capable of destroying fast growing cancer cells.

LIFE AFTER MASTECTOMY (SURGERY DONE TO REMOVE THE BREAST)

Because of the traditional thinking that femininity is associated with presence of breasts; the surgical removal of breast can be traumatic and requires rehabilitation measures. Detachable external prosthesis, silicon prosthesis and reconstructive surgery provide hope to these patients. Breast prostheses help the patients feel as feminine as before and nobody can notice the difference. The fitting of breast prosthesis should occur approximately 6-8 weeks following mastectomy. Careful measurements help in getting a well fitted prosthesis. When fitted correctly, the prosthesis is comfortable and looks as natural as a normal breast.

Following measures should be checked:

- Does the prosthesis fill out the cup of the bra both top and bottom
- Check for similarity. Place the flats of your hands on top of both your natural breast and the prosthesis and compare the size and softness.
- Check that there is not too much fullness in the underarm extension of your prosthesis. You can do this by feeling with the hand, then swinging your arm back and forth. If fullness is greater than on your other side, then a shape with less thickness in this area is indicated.
- Stand upright and look in the mirror to check shape and symmetry. The form should be completely covered by the bra.
- To check final result put on a soft blouse or T-shirt. No difference should be noticed in either breast.

For details on prostheses contact CPAA – 2492 7007.

