

GENERAL BREAST HEALTH

Good breast health starts with the following habits:

- Performing monthly breast self-examinations, beginning at age 20
- Receiving an annual clinical breast exam from your doctor after age 40 (Every three years for women age 20 to 39)
- Receiving annual mammograms, beginning at age 40

These are some of the best ways for you or your doctor to check for changes in your breast. Some of the changes in your breast may appear as an abnormality (i.e., a lump or microcalcifications) which could be cancerous. Early detection of breast cancer greatly increases the chances for successful treatment and survival.

The risk of breast cancer increases after age 40. Women younger than 40 are at relatively low risk of breast cancer (about 1 in 2500 for women in their 20's, 1 in 250 for women in their 30's). However, if a member of your immediate family, such as your mother or a sister, had breast cancer before menopause, you may want to perform breast self-exams and other screenings on a more regular basis before age 40.

Simply being responsible for your body also contributes to good breast health. That means if you should suspect any abnormalities in your breast, contact your doctor.

Source: American Cancer Society