



THE NEW ZEALAND
BREAST CANCER
FOUNDATION

SEVEN WOMEN
ARE DIAGNOSED
EVERY DAY.

BREAST CANCER: **REDUCE YOUR RISK**

- 1 Be breast aware from 20
- 2 Show changes to your doctor
- 3 Start mammograms at 40
- 4 Know your risks

1 BE BREAST AWARE FROM 20

Breast cancer is the most common cancer in New Zealand women. Most breast cancers occur in women over 50 but young women (and sometimes men) get it too, although the risk is much lower. Most people with breast cancer have no close family history of the disease.

Know how your breasts normally look and feel from age 20 so you're more likely to notice changes. Breast cancer's highly treatable if it's diagnosed early.

2 SHOW CHANGES TO YOUR DOCTOR

If you notice any new or unusual changes, even if you've had a mammogram recently, show your doctor.

A new lump

Or thickening of the skin in the breast, armpit or collarbone area

Unusual pain

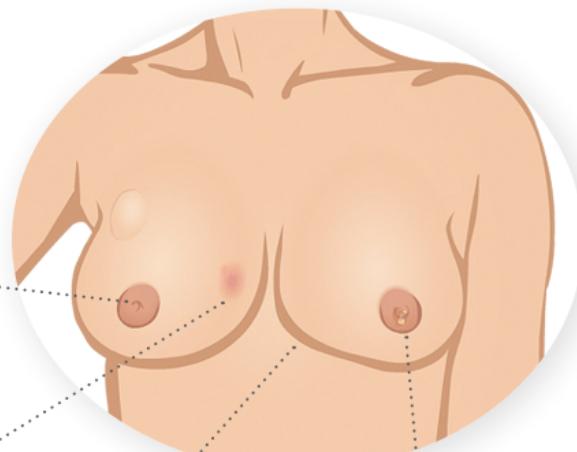
Breast pain which won't go away

Nipple change

A newly inverted (pulled in) or retracted nipple

Skin change

A change in the skin of the breast, e.g. colour, dimpling, puckering or reddening, or flaky, scaly skin on the nipple or areola



Shape change

A change in the breast shape or size

Nipple discharge

A discharge from the nipple that occurs without squeezing

Check for changes

Check your breasts often so you know what's normal for you. Some women notice changes which may be cancerous.

Look for changes in front of a mirror. Place your hands at your sides or your hips. Press your shoulders and elbows forward. You're looking for any new or unusual changes.

Feel for changes in the shower or bath. Glide over each breast with the fingertips of your three middle fingers. Cover all your breast tissue from just under your collarbone to under your breast, and from your mid-chest to your ribs at the side of your chest. Also, with each arm by your side, press your fingers firmly up into each armpit.

If you find any changes, see your doctor for further investigation.

3 START MAMMOGRAMS AT 40

Getting older increases your risk. A screening mammogram is the best method for detecting breast cancer early as it can look for tiny tumours well before a lump can be felt. The Foundation recommends screening:

- ❖ **40-49 years:** every year
- ❖ **50 years onwards:** every two years
- ❖ **70+:** in discussion with your doctor

BreastScreen Aotearoa provides **free** screening mammograms to women aged 45-69 every two years. This programme is for women with no symptoms, so if you have any concerns, show your doctor. To enrol, phone **0800 270 200**.

4 KNOW YOUR RISKS



Your risk goes up with: Reduce your risk by:

	Alcohol	Limiting your intake of alcohol (see www.nzbcf.org.nz for more info)
	Body weight	Maintaining a healthy weight especially after menopause
	Hormone exposure	Discussing hormone exposure with your doctor e.g. HRT, oral contraception after 40, no children or having them later
	Inactivity	Regular exercise 3-5 times per week

All these factors raise your estrogen levels which increase your breast cancer risk.

Also discuss with your doctor risk factors you **can't** change like breast cancer in your close family, your past or radiation treatment to your chest when young.



Need advice?
Call **0800 BCNurse**
(0800 2268 773)

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- ❖ More information at www.nzbcf.org.nz
- ❖ Message us www.facebook.com/NZBreastCancerFoundation
- ❖ Follow us on Twitter: @NZBCF