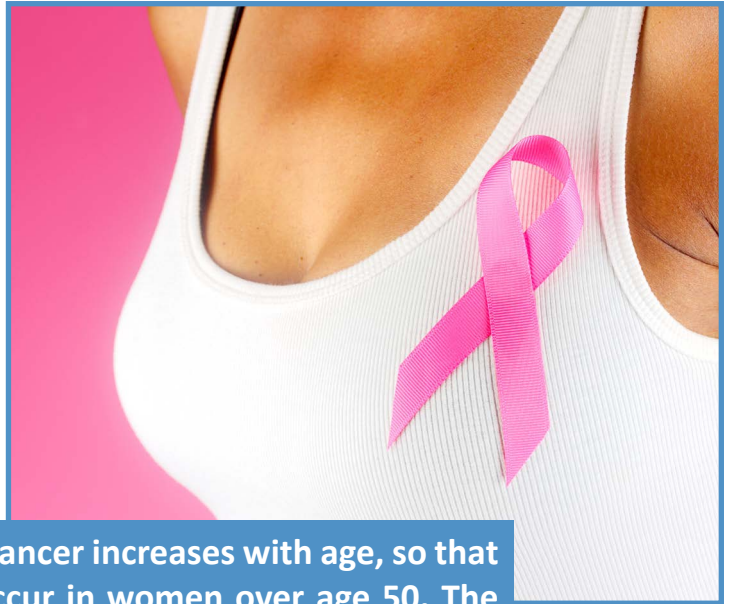


Breast cancer warning signs



A woman's risk of developing breast cancer increases with age, so that more than three out of four cases occur in women over age 50. The longer you live, the higher your risk. Know the warning signs.

You have a higher chance of developing breast cancer if you have:

- A personal history of breast cancer.
- A mother, sister, or daughter with breast cancer.
- Multiple generations of family members affected by breast or ovarian cancer.
- Relatives who were diagnosed with breast cancer at a young age (under 50 years old).
- Relatives who had both breasts affected by cancer.

If you find any worrying changes in any of your breasts book an appointment with your doctor as soon as possible. The earlier cancer is detected, the earlier it can be treated. If you notice any of the below symptoms, have them checked by your doctor.

Lump in the breast or armpit

A lump in the breast does not always mean cancer. There are many other non-cancerous causes of a lump in the breast (like fibrocystic disease). However, if you have a breast lump, it's better to ask you doctor to have a look.

Bleeding from the nipple

Any blood-stained discharge coming from the nipple (either spontaneously or when you squeeze the breast) may indicate cancer.

Pain in the breast/nipple

Most cancers are not painful. However, pain is not normal. It could be part of your menstrual cycle, could be resulting from infection, or could indicate cancer.

Change in the nipple skin

Dryness, itching, redness, or oozing of fluid from the nipple could indicate cancer in the underlying breast. It is possible for these symptoms to be eczema (an allergic dry-skin condition), but don't take any chances.

Retraction of the nipple

If the nipple appears to be 'pulling-in' it could indicate cancer. Any changes in nipple appearance should be investigated.

Changes in the skin of the breast

Dimpling, swelling, or change in the skin colour of the breast or armpit could indicate breast cancer.

You and your breasts

Get to know your breasts. Know what's normal for you. Familiarising yourself with your breasts by self-examining your breasts, means that you will know when changes occur. If you are concerned about your breasts, even if the changes are not listed here, have it checked by your doctor. While it may not indicate breast cancer, rather put your mind at ease.