

BREAST SELF-EXAM

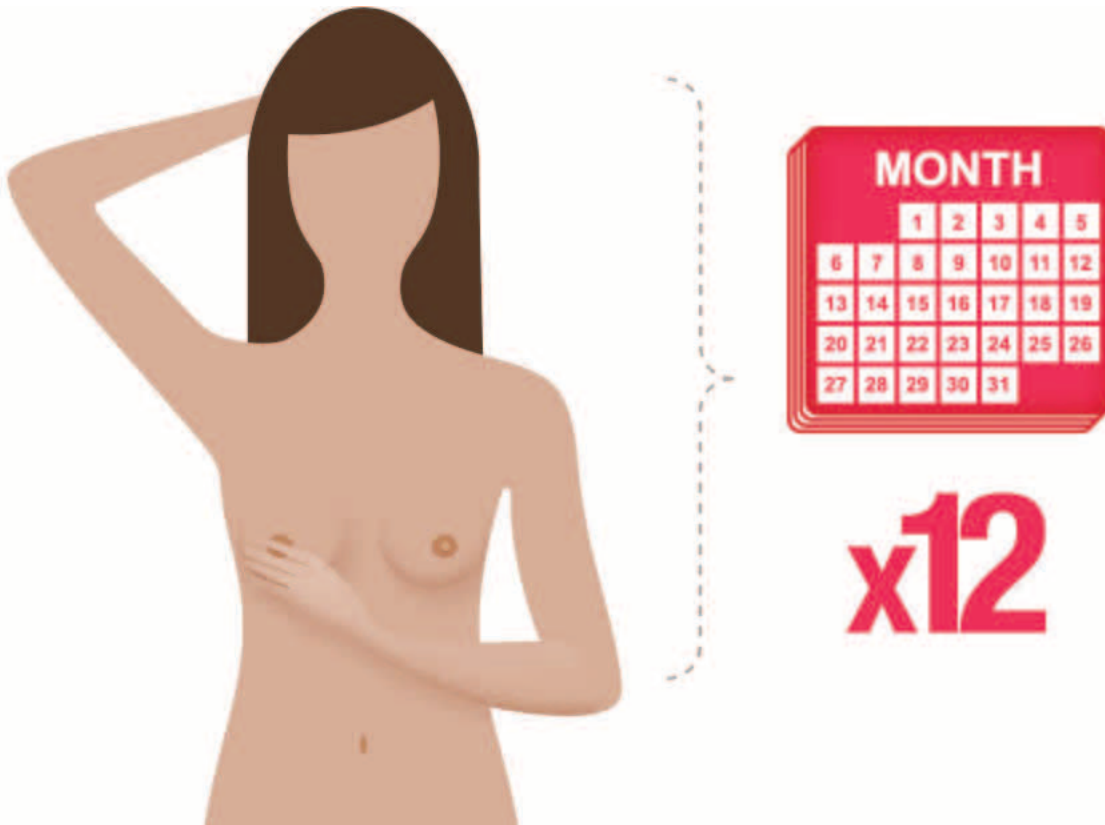


Once a Month

Adult women of all ages are encouraged to perform breast self-exams at least once a month. Johns Hopkins Medical center states:

“Forty percent of diagnosed breast cancers are detected by women who feel a lump, so establishing a regular breast self-exam is very important.”

While mammograms can help you to detect cancer before you can feel a lump, breast self-exams help you to be familiar with how your breasts look and feel so you can alert your healthcare professional if there are any changes.



If you would like to see more information about early detection of breast cancer, click the logo ➤



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How should a breast self-exam be performed?



In the shower

1) In the Shower

Using the pads of your fingers, move around your entire breast in a circular pattern moving from the outside to the center, checking the entire breast and armpit area. Check both breasts each month feeling for any lump, thickening, or hardened knot. Notice any changes and get lumps evaluated by your healthcare provider.



In front of a mirror

2) In Front of a Mirror

Visually inspect your breasts with your arms at your sides. Next, raise your arms high overhead.

Look for any changes in the contour, any swelling, or dimpling of the skin, or changes in the nipples. Next, rest your palms on your hips and press firmly to flex your chest muscles. Left and right breasts will not exactly match—few women's breasts do, so look for any dimpling, puckering, or changes, particularly on one side.



Lying down

3) Lying Down

When lying down, the breast tissue spreads out evenly along the chest wall. Place a pillow under your right shoulder and your right arm behind your head. Using your left hand, move the pads of your fingers around your right breast gently in small circular motions covering the entire breast area and armpit.

Use light, medium, and firm pressure. Squeeze the nipple; check for discharge and lumps. Repeat these steps for your left breast.

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