

# breast self-examination & breast screening



Department of Surgical Oncology



## what is breast cancer?

Cancer is a disease in which cells become abnormal and form more cells in an uncontrolled way. With breast cancer, the cancer begins in cells that make up the breasts - usually in the tubes that carry milk to the nipple or the glands that make milk. The cancerous cells form a mass of tissue called a tumor. Sometimes, the cancer spreads to other.

## why is screening important?

The risk of developing cancer increases, as you get older. Although some risks have been identified, the causes of breast cancer are not fully understood. The best action is to detect it early by performing regular breast screening, which enables early treatment. Complete breast cancer screening includes a mammogram, clinical breast exam by a doctor and breast self-exam. Remember, early detection saves lives.

## incidence

Please follow DOH/APDHC guidelines mammogram every 2 years from the age of 40.

## importance in middle east

"Breast cancer constitutes 13-35% of all female cancers. Almost half of patients are below 50 and median age is 45-48 as compared to 63 in industrialised nations. Population based screening is rarely practiced. Results from recent campaigns and studies show a positive impact of clinical breast examination leading to more early diagnosis and breast-conserving surgery.."

"An alarming recent global increase in breast cancer is related to social factors like smoking, alcohol, obesity, lower exercise levels as well as hormonal risk factors like early menarche, delayed parity and reduced breast feeding. "2-3-4

1. Ref:El Saghir NS et al: Trends in epidemiology and management of breast cancer in developing Arab counties. A literature and registry analysis. Int J Surg. 2007 Aug;5(4L)225-33.

## DOH/APDHC breast cancer screen guidelines

### Breast Self-Examination (BSA) or breast self – awareness

Know your body- do the self-examination on a monthly basis after the menstrual cycle from the age of 20 years.

### clinical breast exams (ce)

Do clinical breast examination every three years at least starting from the age of 20 years, and every year starting from the age of 40 years.

### mammography

All women, age 40 + should undertake a screening mammogram every two years

## how is screening done at burjeel cancer institute?

Mammograms are performed on a "state-of-the-art " Inspiration· by Siemens. This is followed by an ultrasound on AcusonS2000. The study averages 45 minutes to 1 hour and is ideally performed on 2nd to 4th day of the menstrual cycle.

## what exactly is mammogram?

A mammogram is a total examination to screen for breast cancer. Each breast is compressed between two plates as small amounts of radiation take an internal picture (X-ray) of the breast. A radiologist then looks at these pictures and can find signs of potential cancer.

## will it hurt during the procedure?

The procedure may hurt your breasts, but the technician needs to compress the breast to get an accurate picture. The pain should not be unbearable only a little uncomfortable. It may help to take a pain relief medication before getting a mammogram. It is good to schedule your mammogram after your period because the breasts are generally less sensitive.



## how accurate is a mammogram?

Mammograms can detect 80-90% of breast cancers in women without symptoms and when combined with a clinical breast exam and diligent self-breast examination, the chances of a cancer going undetected are very low.

## what if the mammogram shows something wrong?

More comprehensive tests will be done. Possibly an ultrasound, a biopsy, MRI, or a more intensive diagnostic mammography will be done to determine more comprehensive results.

## what should i wear the day of the exam?

It is not a good idea to wear deodorant, perfume, lotion, or any other cosmetic product the day of the mammogram. These products can distort the mammogram giving a false negative or false positive. Also, you will be asked to undress from the waist up, so it's best not to wear a dress.

Should I still get a mammogram if I'm pregnant? Because the effects of radiation on the fetus are not known, in general doctors do not recommend a mammography for pregnant woman. Other imaging tests will be done, such as an ultrasound. Women who are pregnant should be diligent about doing breast exams themselves.

2. Arafat Tfayli et al: Breast Cancer in low-and middle-income countries: An emerging and Challenging Epidemic. Journal of Oncology volume 2010. article ID 490631



## will a mammogram affect breast feeding?

A mammogram will not have any effect on breast feeding, but the results may not be as accurate. So, women breast feeding should be diligent in doing their breast self-examination.

If I have breast Implant can I get a mammogram?

Yes you can get a mammogram with breast implants, but you need to tell the technicians beforehand.

## what is a BSE?

BSE stands for Breast Self-Exam. It is an exam that should be done monthly by all women over the age of 20.

It can detect breast lumps about the size of a quarter & it is a great screening tool that can help in early detection of breast cancer.

## Pattern for Breast Self - Examination



## what is a false positive result? what is a false negative result?

A false positive is when a mammogram is mistakenly interpreted a cancer when the person being tested actually does NOT have cancer. A false negative is when a mammogram reads as 'negative' (i.e. no cancer) but the person being tested actually does have cancer.

3. Porter P. "Westernizing" women's risks? Breast cancer in lower-income countries. *The New England Journal of Medicine*. 2008;358(3):213-216.
4. Anyanwu SNC. Temporal trends in breast cancer presentation in the third world. *Journal of Experimental and Clinical Cancer Research*. 2008;27(1), article 171
5. NHS breast screening, helping you decide.

## Brest Self-Examination (BSE)



Stand in front of the mirror and look at each breast separately. Note the size, shape, colour, contour and direction of your breast and nipples. Compare them and look for puckers, dimples or other changes.



Raise your arms over your head and look at your breasts, as you turn slowly from side to side.



Stand in front of a mirror and start BSE just below the collar bone.



Use the left hand for the right breast. Apply firm pressure and make small circles as you go back and forth (up or down, circular or spoke style) in a pattern covering all the breast area including the nipple. Extend the examination to the breast tissue in the arm pit. Change your hand and repeat BSE on the opposite breast.



Lie down and raise one arm above your head. Examine your breast as before. Change the arm and repeat BSE on the opposite breast.

## how often should i get a mammogram?

You should do a BSE (Breast Self-Examination) every month if you are over the age of 20 and it's a good idea to have a complete breast exam every 3 years as well. If you are over 40 years old then you should get a mammogram every 2 years no matter what age you are.

## why do i need to get a mammogram every 2 years?

It is important to get a mammogram every 2 years if you are over 40 because it is easier to detect changes in the breast if the radiologist has a picture of every 2 years to compare. A breast lump needs to be about the size of a quarter before a woman can feel it herself, a mammogram can detect a lump smaller than a pencil eraser.







## can a mammogram cause cancer?

No women have been shown to have developed breast cancer as a result of mammography. The American Cancer Society reports that a woman receiving treatment for breast cancer would receive several thousand rads, whereas a woman getting a mammogram every year from age 40 to 90 would receive only around 10 rads. The breast is being exposed to radiation which can cause cancer, but the chances of getting cancer from mammograms do not out weight the benefits of early detection.

## can i get an ultrasound instead of a mammogram?

Ultrasound is an essential complement to the mammogram; while the mammogram can pick up calcification and abnormal opacities, ultrasound can help to characterize the mass. Please, bring the last previous imaging for comparison purposes; this is vital for optimal evaluation. Maintain all records diligently.



## **i'm a man, should i get a mammogram?**

Men do get breast cancer, Men can get mammograms and definitely should if they have risk factors associated with male breast cancer or have any physical symptoms (lumps, pain, discharge, etc.)

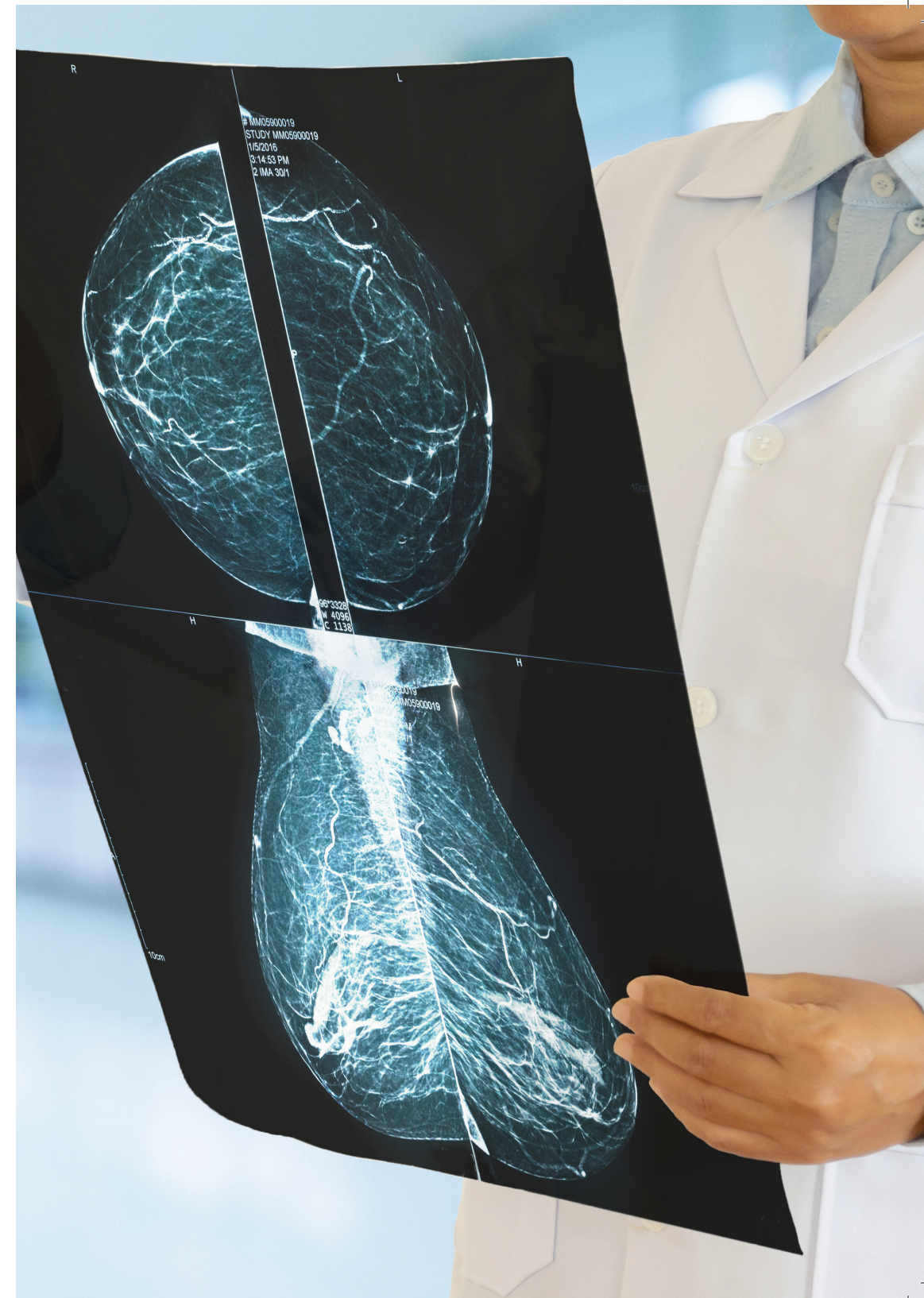
## **what is the smallest size tumor that a mammogram can detect?**

A mammogram can detect tumors at very early stages, when they are around the size of a pencil eraser. At this point the tumors are still very small and usually readily treated. Importantly, mammograms are able to identify cancers that are not detectable via breast self-exam (BSE)

## **what if i'm physically disabled, can i get a mammogram?**

Women with disabilities don't get mammograms as often as a woman without disabilities. This should not be the case. Women with disabilities should call the mammogram facility beforehand to determine if they are capable of accommodating disabled women. If the center is not capable, call other certified mammography centers until you find one. Remember, your disability should NOT prevent you from getting a mammogram.

Results of your examination: will be released in 48 hours. 96 out of 100 women will have normal results. Approximately 4 in 100 women will have to come back for more tests. 1 in 4 women will be diagnosed with cancer. Further examination like an MR mammogram and/or a biopsy will be required. Your images will be stored in our PACs system for future reference and comparison.





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