

Breast Cancer

What is breast cancer?

Breast cancer is a mass of malignant cells that forms in the tissues of the breast. This type of cancer can occur in both men and women, although it is most common in women.

Most Common Symptoms for breast cancer are:

- Mass or lump in the breast and armpit and collarbone area.
- Inflammation of part or the entire breast (even if is not felt a definite bump).
- Irritation or cracks in the skin.
- Pain in the breast or nipple
- Retraction of nipples.
- Redness, flaking, or thickening of the skin of the breast or nipple.
- Nipple secretions.

What Factors can increase my risk of breast cancer?

While age is the most important risk factor for breast cancer, the risk is not the same for all women of a certain age group. Women with the following factors have a greater risk of developing breast cancer:

- Personal or family history of breast cancer.
- Breast changes detected by biopsy.
- Menstrual periods before 12 years of age or menopause after 55 years of age.
- Having the first child after 30 years of age, or not having had children.
- Extended use of HRT for menopause.
- Dense breast tissue.
- Radiation therapy to the chest before 30 years of age.
- Consumption of Alcohol
- Obesity
- Lack of exercise

What can I do to detect breast cancer?

Perform monthly breast self-exams, if you notice a change in the breasts, consult your doctor immediately. Changes in the breasts are not always cancer, but only a doctor can determine it with certainty by carrying out the necessary tests. Mammograms should be performed every two years for women 40 - 49 years and annually for those 50 and older.

Myths and realities

Myth: Regular self-exams keep you from having to get a mammogram.

Reality: Breast self-exams can help in the detection of cancer; mammograms can detect it up to 2 years before you.

Myth: Mammograms are painful.

Reality: This test can cause discomfort but not pain. What you feel will depend on the amount of pressure required to be applied to your breasts.

Myth: Mammograms can cause cancer.

Reality: No study has shown that having an annual mammogram cause cancer. The American Cancer Society states that you would receive a greater amount of radiation in the treatment against breast cancer compared with that received by a mammogram. The benefit outweighs the risk.

For more information about breast cancer and how to help prevent it, talk to your doctor. In Triple-S Salud we care about you. To learn more about your benefits contact our Customer Service Center by calling 787-774-6060 or access www.ssspr.com/federal.

