

**Patient Information for the
Gloucestershire Health Community**

**Breast Awareness
Information for all women**

Be Breast Aware

Many breast cancers are first noticed by women themselves. Breast cancer is much easier to treat if it is detected at an early stage.

By being familiar with how your breasts usually look and feel, you are more likely to be able to spot any changes. So 'Be Breast Aware' and follow the five point code.

1. Know what is normal for you
2. Look and feel
3. Know what changes to look for
4. Attend breast screening if you are 50 or over
5. Report any changes to your doctor without delay

What changes should you look for?

- A lump in one breast or armpit which is new or different from the other side
- Changes in shape, appearance and feel of your breasts
- A change in skin – dimpling, puckering or redness
- Nipple discharge, a rash or change in nipple position
- Discomfort or pain in one breast that is different from normal

Feel for changes

Some women find that it is easier to do this in the bath or shower, using a soapy hand. Feel for any lumps or thickened areas in the breast or in the armpit.

Don't panic, but don't ignore

If you do spot any changes, try not to panic. Most abnormalities are not due to cancer. However, it is important to have changes checked by a doctor as soon as possible.

Screening

In the UK, ALL women between the ages of 50 and 70 are routinely invited for breast screening every three years. It is important for all women over 50 to attend for screening when invited. At the screening unit you will have a mammogram, this can detect changes in the breast before symptoms occur.

Women over 70 can also go for screening, but they need to request it.

Screening is effective but no screening test is perfect, so please become 'breast aware'.

All NHS screening is free.

The Gloucestershire Breast Screening Service is at Linton House, Cheltenham.

Telephone: (01242) 251081

To find out more:

On the Web: www.breastcancercare.org.uk

Confidential Breast Cancer Care Helpline

Tel: 0808 800 6000

NHS Direct: 0845 4647

Please share this information with a relative or friend.