



OCTOBER

BREAST CANCER

AWARENESS MONTH

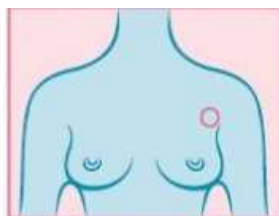
Breast cancer, it's a scary thought and all too many women assume that it won't happen to them.

So, during breast cancer awareness month 2020 go for a medical check-up, it might save your life.

Early signs of breast cancer can be a lump in a breast, a painful breast or armpit, or a discharge from the nipple. See the diagrams below.



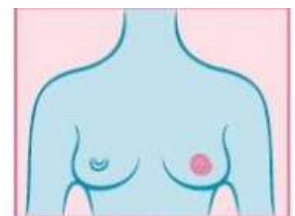
A puckering of the skin of the breast



A lump in the breast or armpit



A change in the skin around the nipple or nipple discharge



Dimpling of the nipple or nipple retraction



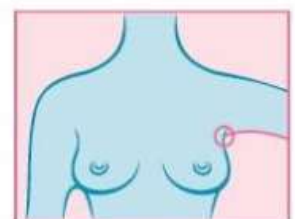
An unusual increase in the size of one breast



One breast unusually lower than the other. Nipples at different levels



An enlargement of the glands



An unusual swelling in the armpit

Early detection is the best prevention

Research has shown that a regular *Breast Self-Examination (BSE)*, plays an important role in discovering breast cancer, compared to finding a breast lump by chance. About 90% of women who are diagnosed early with breast cancer and treated appropriately survive for many years afterwards.

A BSE should be done once a month, preferably at the same time of day, following a woman's menstrual cycle.

Mammograms

Mammograms (a special x-ray to detect lumps in the breast), *do not prevent* breast cancer, but they can *save lives by finding breast cancer as early as possible*. Finding breast cancers early with mammography has also meant that many *more women being treated for breast cancer are able to keep their breasts*. When caught early, localised cancers can be removed without resorting to breast removal (mastectomy).

You should go for a regular mammogram from the age of 40.

Most medical aids cover a mammogram every 2 years, with annual mammograms being recommended dependent upon family or medical history.

Risk factors

One of the greatest risks for breast cancer is obesity, particularly after menopause.

Other risk factors include smoking, not being physically active, consuming alcohol and age.

A high fat diet or one that is very dense in animal protein can increase your risk of breast cancer. Your diet should include lots of fruit, vegetables and healthy proteins like fish, legumes and eggs.

Stress can also be a factor.