

# Know Your Body - Do Breast Self-Exam

## In front of a mirror

- 👉 Look carefully at both breasts with arms at your sides.
- 👉 Then raise your arms overhead, pressing palms together. (Figure 1)
- 👉 Put hand on hips, moving arms and shoulders forward.
- 👉 Press down firmly.
- 👉 Look for any change from what is normal for you - swelling, dimpling or any change in the nipple, or shape of your breast.

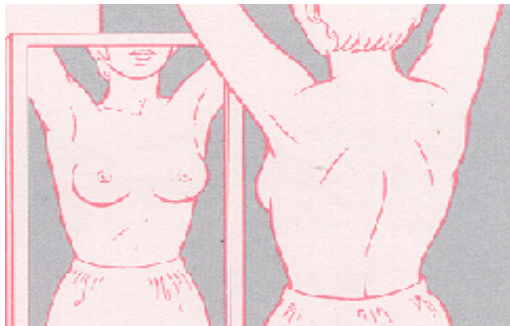


Figure 1

## Lying down

- 👉 Place a pillow or folded towel under your right shoulder. This flattens the breast and makes it easier to exam. (Figure 2)
- 👉 Put your right hand behind your head.
- 👉 Use the flat part of three fingers of your left hand. The finger pads are the top third of each finger. (Figure 3)
- 👉 Begin at the top of your right breast.
- 👉 Press firmly in small circular motions.
- 👉 Move fingers clockwise around the outer circle of the breast, returning to your starting point.
- 👉 Move fingers down about 1" toward the nipple and start a second circle.
- 👉 Using this technique, make as many circles as necessary to examine every part of the breast, including the entire underarm area.
- 👉 Using the same three fingers, press nipple inward feeling for lumps or anything that doesn't feel normal.
- 👉 Use these same simple steps to exam your other breast. (See figures A, B & C)



Figure 2

## In the shower or tub

- 👉 Soapy fingers glide over wet skin.
- 👉 Use right hand to examine left breast, left hand for right breast. Thoroughly examine from the breast area to the neck, shoulder, and underarm areas.
- 👉 Press firmly with flat part of three fingers. (Figure 4)
- 👉 Check for a change such as a lump or thickening.

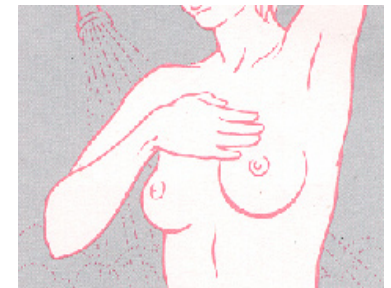
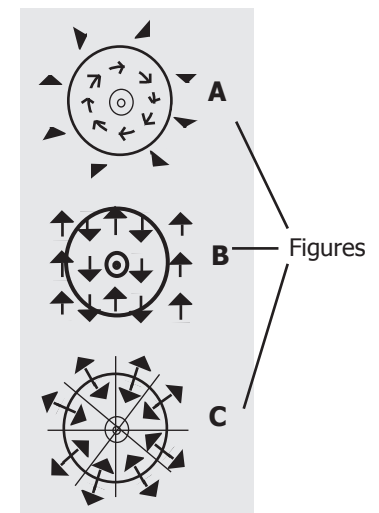


Figure 4



Figure 3



Figures

## Early Detection Tools



### **Breast Self-Examination (BSE)**

**When:** (age 20 and over)

- Every month.
- 7-10 days after the first day of your period.
- After change of life (menopause) or hysterectomy on the same day of each month.

**Why:**

- Being familiar with your own breast tissue allows you to detect change.
- Most breast lumps are found by women themselves.
- Early detection cancer has a good chance of cure.
- Early diagnosis and treatment may save your breast and your life.



### **Clinical (Physical) Examination**

**When:**

- Age 20-39, at least every three years.
- After age 40, every year.

**Why:**

- Examination by a trained health care professional is your best protection along with mammography and monthly BSE.



### **Mammography (Breast X-Ray)**

**When:**

- Beginning at age 40, have an annual mammogram.

**Why:**

- This breast x-ray finds cancers too small to be detected by hand.
- Mammography is the most effective tool in finding early breast cancers.

*For more information  
about  
Breast Health*

**American Cancer Society**

1-800-ACS-2345

[www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)

**Shawnee County Health Agency**

1615 SW 8th Avenue

Topeka, Kansas

785-368-2000

[www.snco.us/ha/ga](http://www.snco.us/ha/ga)



*Your  
Personal Plan  
for  
Breast Health*

**Shawnee County  
Health Agency**

