

## Other things you should know about breast health.

### THE BIRTH CONTROL PILL

Talk to your doctor carefully about the risk of breast cancer and taking the pill, especially if there is a history of breast cancer in your family. Nobody knows for sure what part the pill may play in breast cancer.

### IMPLANTS & BREAST REDUCTIONS

If this is something you are thinking about, you should be aware of the potential risks. Breast implants can make it difficult for mammography to discover an early breast cancer, while breast reductions can interfere with the ability to breast feed later on in life. Both procedures should be carefully discussed with a plastic surgeon before a final decision is made.

### BREAST INJURY & BREAST CANCER

If you receive an injury to your breasts, you can relax! There is no link between breast injury and breast cancer. However, an injury to the breast should not be ignored. It should heal the same as any other injury to your body. If it does not, see a doctor.



The mission of Y-ME National Breast Cancer Organization is to ensure, through information, empowerment and peer support, that no one faces breast cancer alone.

If you or someone you know has any questions about breast care, call the 24-hour Y-ME National Breast Cancer Hotline:  
800-221-2141 (English)\*  
800-986-9505 (Spanish)

\*Interpreters available in nearly 150 languages.

212 West Van Buren, Suite 1000  
Chicago, IL 60607-3908

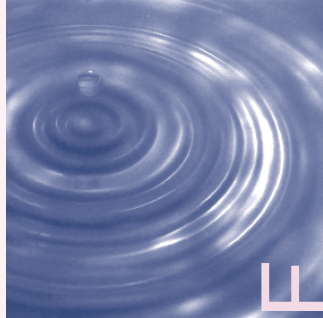
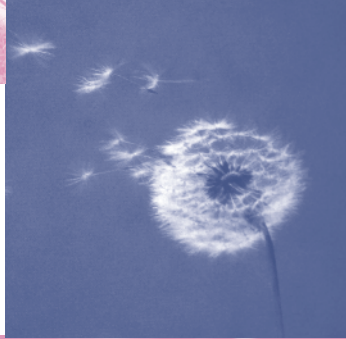
[www.y-me.org](http://www.y-me.org)

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### Just for Teens A Teen Guide to Breast Care



Today, your breasts are probably healthy and they may stay that way for the rest of your life. But sometimes, as a woman grows older, changes can occur that may be a problem. One of these problems is breast cancer.

This brochure tells you how to take control of your own health by learning to do breast self-examination (BSE). This is a way for you to know how your breasts look and feel now, while they are healthy. Later on, if something should seem different, you'll know to take action immediately.

1

Good breast care is as easy as ...

**Perform breast self-exams once a month.** If you find something that you know is unusual for you, have a doctor check it out.

2

**See your doctor on a regular basis.** A clinical breast exam once a year will help your doctor learn what is normal for your breasts.

3

**Get a mammogram beginning at age 40.** A mammogram is an x-ray of your breast. It is important because it can find a suspicious lump while it is small – even before it can be felt. Mammograms are not usually performed on women until they are 40 years old, because breast tissue in younger women is dense and it is difficult to get a good, clear picture.

Talk through these three steps with women you know, like your mother, sisters and friends. If they don't know about proper breast care, perhaps you can help them.



## Breast Self-Examination: Your Key to Better Breast Health

Breast self-examination takes just a few minutes each month. It's best to perform your exam about seven to ten days after the first day of your period, when your breasts are least tender. Your breasts are an important part of your body and they deserve your attention. As you do your examination, keep in mind that your goal is to become acquainted with how your breasts look and feel.

1

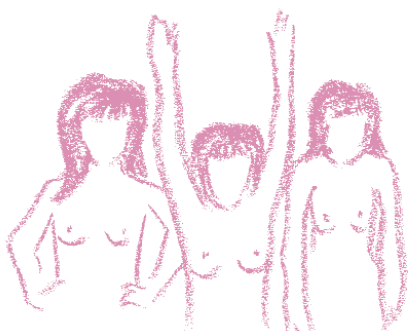
### LOOKING

Use a mirror.

First, stand in front of a mirror, keeping your arms relaxed at your sides.

Notice the shape and size of your breasts. Compare both breasts. It is not unusual for one breast to be larger than the other. Now look at your nipples. Notice their direction and how alike they are. Next, look at your skin. Take note of the smooth texture and even color.

Look at the same things with your arms in different positions.



Hands on hips. Bending forward.  
Arms raised above head.

Looking

2



### FEELING

To examine your right breast, lie on your back.

As you do this part of the examination, remember that some lumpiness is normal. Your job now is to learn what your breasts feel like normally, while you are healthy.

Place a pillow or a folded towel under your right shoulder. Put your right arm out, with your elbow at a 90° angle.

3



Check the entire self-exam area.  
(see dotted line)

The dotted line in this image shows the area you need to examine during BSE. Pay careful attention to the shaded area – most breast tissue is located here.

4

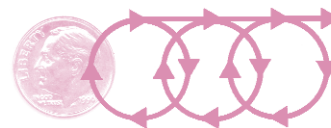


Use the pads of your fingers – not the tips.

Use the pads of the three middle fingers of your left hand to examine your right breast.

Feeling

5



Move the pads of your fingers in very small circles.

As you examine your breast, move the pads of your fingers in little circles – about the size of a dime. Don't lift your fingers from your breast as you move them – you might miss something that way. If your fingers rub you too much, use some lotion to make it easier.

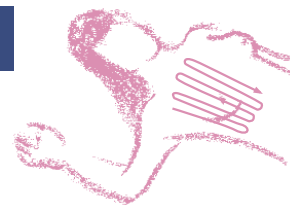
6



Examine all levels of breast tissue.

For each small circle, change the amount of pressure so you can feel all levels of your breast tissue. Make each small circle three times – once light, once medium and once deep.

7



Cover the exam area in up-and-down strips.

Start in your armpit and move down to just below your breast. Now move your fingers over – just the width of one finger and move up again. Continue this up-and-down pattern until you have covered the entire self-exam area; from your collarbone to just below your breast.

8



Examine your armpit.

Some parts of your breast extend into your armpit. Examine this area again, with your arm relaxed at your side. It will feel a little different in this position.

9



Look for nipple discharge.

Some women may see a clear or milky fluid discharged from their nipple. This is probably normal. A bloody fluid is something that should be checked by your doctor.

10



Repeat these steps on your left breast, using your right hand.