



# Breast cancer:

## Tips and techniques for early detection

**D**id you know that the earlier breast cancer is diagnosed, the better the odds that treatment will be successful? Exciting advancements in medical testing are helping to ensure that breast cancer is detected earlier and with more accurate results.

"Early detection of breast cancer is very important because we can save more lives and use less aggressive treatments if the cancer is caught early," says Dr. William Owens, medical director of breast health at Aurora BayCare Medical Center in Green Bay.

Here are some simple steps you can take to ensure early detection:

### GET REGULAR PHYSICAL EXAMS AND MAMMOGRAMS

It's important to find a doctor you trust and get yearly physical exams, including a breast exam. Mammograms are vital screening tools as well. "Mammograms are still the gold standard for screening," says Dr. Colette Salm-Schmid, breast surgeon with Prevea Health. "Women should have a baseline mammogram at 35 and then depending on their history, they should be screened regularly. If a woman has a history of a biopsy, or a family history of breast cancer, then they should be screened yearly probably starting at age 40." Talk to your doctor about how often you should have a mammogram.


by KATIE ELLINGSON

## KNOW YOUR BODY AND PAY ATTENTION TO CHANGES.

"In order to find a breast cancer early you have to be making sure you know your body and yourself," says Salm-Schmid. "You do not have to be obsessed, but you need to be aware of what your normal state is and if something changes." Things to look for include lumps in the breast, puckering in of the skin, changes in shape or symmetry of your breasts, or discharge from the nipple. Again, talk to your doctor if you have concerns.

## LEARN YOUR FAMILY HISTORY.

If you have a family history of breast cancer, talk to your doctor — you may be considered high risk and your doctor may recommend you start testing earlier, more often, and/or try genetic testing.

Take the time to get screened regularly and to pay attention to changes in your body. "As we continue to learn more about breast cancer prevention we are finding that there is significant overlap in prevention for colon cancer and heart disease," adds Salm-Schmid. "Taking care of yourself is one of the best gifts you can give your family, your significant other, but most important, yourself!" 

## Advancements in breast cancer detection

### Three-dimensional (3D) mammography

3D mammography is a technique that will be available soon at Aurora BayCare Medical Center. This type of mammogram takes multiple views of the breast instead of just two. "The radiologist can see the breast in layers; this allows the radiologist to be more certain of their findings," says Owens. "The 2D view may not pick up a tumor mass with women that have dense breast tissue. This can lead to more false positives, which can lead to extra cost and anxiety." The 3D mammogram can help alleviate these issues.

### Contrast-enhanced mammography

With this technique, dye goes into breast tissue and lights up in the mammogram. This can give more accurate results and earlier detection of breast cancer. "This is one of the most up-to-date and exciting of the new innovations in breast cancer detection," says Owens.

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# A Selfie that could save your life.

PERFORMING MONTHLY SELF-EXAMS ON YOUR BREASTS AND SKIN FOR EARLY DETECTION IS THE BEST PROTECTION.



*"Forty percent of diagnosed breast cancers are detected by women who feel a lump, so establishing a regular breast self-exam is very important."*

While mammograms can help you to detect cancer before you can feel a lump, breast self-exams help you to be familiar with how your breasts look and feel so you can alert your healthcare professional if there are any changes.

## If you can spot it, you can stop it.

Skin cancer is the most common of all cancers, afflicting more than two million Americans each year. Skin cancers found and removed early are almost always curable. If you spot anything suspicious, see your dermatologist.



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