

Breast Cancer: Symptoms



What are the symptoms of breast cancer?

Breast cancer often causes no symptoms in its early stages, when it's very small and has not spread. People with early breast cancer usually don't have pain or notice any breast changes caused by the cancer. This is why routine screening tests such as mammograms are important. They are often able to detect the disease in its early stages before symptoms occur.

As breast cancer grows, it can cause symptoms such as:

- A lump, thickening, or swelling in or near your breast or under your arm
- A change in the size or shape of your breast
- Nipple discharge that's often bloody and only in one breast
- Nipple inversion, meaning the nipple pulls back into your breast
- Nipple or breast pain, tenderness, or aching
- A change in the look of the skin of your breast, areola, or nipple, such as becoming dimpled or puckered or turning red or purple
- A change in the feel of the skin of your breast, areola, or nipple, such as turning itchy or scaly

When to see your healthcare provider

Many of these symptoms may be caused by other health problems. But it is important to see your healthcare provider right away if you have any of these symptoms. Only a healthcare provider can tell if you have cancer.

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