

DOCUMENT TITLE: Signs and Symptoms of Breast Cancer

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OVERVIEW OF BREAST CANCER SYMPTOMS

Breast cancer symptoms vary widely.

Many breast cancers cause no noticeable symptoms, especially in early stages.

COMMON BREAST CHANGES ASSOCIATED WITH BREAST CANCER

Possible symptoms include:

- Swelling of all or part of the breast
- Skin irritation or dimpling
- Breast pain or tenderness
- Nipple pain or inversion
- Redness, scaliness, or thickening of breast or nipple skin
- Nipple discharge not related to breast milk
- Lump or swelling in the underarm area

BREAST PAIN AND ASSOCIATED CONDITIONS

Breast pain is not a common symptom of early breast cancer.

Pain may occur when a tumor presses on surrounding tissue.

Pain and tenderness may be early symptoms of inflammatory breast cancer.

Paget disease of the nipple may cause pain, burning, and irritation.

BREAST LUMPS OR MASSES

A new lump or mass may be the first noticeable sign of breast cancer.

Cancerous lumps are more likely to be:

- Painless
- Hard
- Irregular in shape

However, some breast cancers may feel soft, tender, or rounded.

ASYMPTOMATIC BREAST CANCER

Some breast cancers do not cause symptoms.

They may be detected only through imaging studies such as mammography.

CLINICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF SYMPTOMS

Breast symptoms may also be caused by benign conditions such as infections or cysts.

Clinical evaluation is required to determine the cause of breast changes.