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Breast Diseases

What are breast diseases?

Breast diseases include various conditions and changes in your breast. Most women experience breast changes at some time. Your age, hormone levels, and medicines you take may cause lumps, bumps, and discharges of fluids that are not breast milk.

Although many women fear cancer [<https://medlineplus.gov/breastcancer.html>] , most breast changes are benign, meaning they are not cancer. These breast changes are known as benign breast disease. See your health care provider if you have a breast lump, pain, discharge, or skin irritation. Minor and serious breast problems often have similar symptoms and may need treatment.

Common breast changes and conditions can include:

- **Fibrocystic breast changes** can include lumpiness, thickening, and swelling, often just before your period [<https://medlineplus.gov/menstruation.html>] . Your breasts may feel painful, swollen, or tender.
- **Cysts** are fluid-filled lumps that may be tender.
- **Fibroadenomas** are solid, round, rubbery lumps that easily move when pushed, occurring most in younger women.
- **Intraductal papillomas** are wart-like benign tumors that grow in the milk duct of the breast.
- **Blocked milk ducts**.
- **Milk production** when you're not breastfeeding.

What are the symptoms of breast disease?

Symptoms depend on the type of breast disease. Benign breast diseases may not have any symptoms, or they could include:

- A lump or firm feeling in your breast or under your arm
- A change in the size or shape of your breast
- Nipple discharge
- Skin changes such as itching, redness or darkening, dimples, scaling, or puckering on your breast or nipple
- Painful, swollen, or tender breasts

See your provider if you're noticing any of these symptoms or other unusual changes. Some symptoms may be warning signs or symptoms of breast cancer.

How are breast diseases diagnosed?

Some breast changes may be felt or seen. You may notice a change in your breast, or your provider may notice it during a clinical breast exam [<https://medlineplus.gov/womenshealthcheckup.html>] . Other breast changes may only be found during a screening mammogram [<https://medlineplus.gov/mammography.html>] or other imaging tests [<https://medlineplus.gov/diagnosticimaging.html>] such as an MRI or ultrasound. Your provider may also recommend a breast biopsy [<https://medlineplus.gov/lab-tests/breast-biopsy/>] to check a suspicious change in your breast.

What are the treatments for breast disease?

Some benign breast changes may increase your risk of breast cancer in the future and may need treatment now. Treatment depends on the type of breast disease that you have. Some breast changes may go away without treatment, while others may require monitoring, biopsy [<https://medlineplus.gov/biopsy.html>] , or surgery.

NIH: National Cancer Institute

Start Here

- Breast Health: Follow-up After an Abnormal Mammogram [<https://www.cancer.gov/types/breast/breast-changes>]  (National Cancer Institute)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.cancer.gov/espanol/tipos/seno/significado-cambios-en-los-senos>]
- Facts for Life: Benign Breast Conditions [<https://www.komen.org/wp-content/uploads/BenignBreastConditions.pdf>] (Susan G. Komen for the Cure) - 
- Non-Cancerous Breast Conditions [<https://www.cancer.org/cancer/types/breast-cancer/non-cancerous-breast-conditions.html>] (American Cancer Society)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.cancer.org/es/cancer/tipos/cancer-de-seno/afecciones-no-cancerosas-de-los-senos.html>]

Diagnosis and Tests

- Breast Biopsy [<https://medlineplus.gov/lab-tests/breast-biopsy/>]  (National Library of Medicine)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/pruebas-de-laboratorio/biopsia-de-seno/>]
- Breast Cyst Aspiration [<https://familydoctor.org/breast-cyst-aspiration/?adfree=true>] (American Academy of Family Physicians)
Also in Spanish [<https://es.familydoctor.org/aspiracion-de-quiste-mamario/?adfree=true>]
- Breast Lump or Breast Changes: Early Evaluation Is Essential [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/womens-health/in-depth/breast-lump/art-20044839?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/healthy-lifestyle/womens-health/in-depth/breast-lump/art-20044839?p=1>]
- Breast Ultrasound [<https://www.radiologyinfo.org/en/info/breastus>]
(American College of Radiology; Radiological Society of North America)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.radiologyinfo.org/es/info/breastus>]
- Galactography (Ductography) [<https://www.radiologyinfo.org/en/info/galactogram>]
 (American College of Radiology; Radiological Society of North America)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.radiologyinfo.org/es/info/galactogram>]
- Needle Biopsy [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/tests-procedures/needle-biopsy/about/pac-20394749?p=1>]
(Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/tests-procedures/needle-biopsy/about/pac-20394749?p=1>]

Specifics

- Adenosis of the Breast [<https://www.cancer.org/cancer/types/breast-cancer/non-cancerous-breast-conditions/adenosis-of-the-breast.html>] (American Cancer Society)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.cancer.org/es/cancer/tipos/cancer-de-seno/afecciones-no-cancerosas-de-los-senos/adenosis-del-seno.html>]
- Breast Calcifications [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/symptoms/breast-calcifications/basics/definition/SYM-20050834?p=1>]
(Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/symptoms/breast-calcifications/basics/definition/sym-20050834?p=1>]
- Breast Cysts [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/breast-cysts/symptoms-causes/syc-20370284?p=1>]
(Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/diseases-conditions/breast-cysts/symptoms-causes/syc-20370284?p=1>]
- Breast Lumps [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/symptoms/breast-lumps/basics/definition/SYM-20050619?p=1>]
(Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
- Breast Pain [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/breast-pain/symptoms-causes/syc-20350423?p=1>]
(Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/diseases-conditions/breast-pain/symptoms-causes/syc-20350423?p=1>]

- **Breast Rash** [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/symptoms/breast-rash/basics/definition/SYM-20050817?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/symptoms/breast-rash/basics/definition/sym-20050817?p=1>]
- **Fat Necrosis and Oil Cysts in the Breast** [<https://www.cancer.org/cancer/types/breast-cancer/non-cancerous-breast-conditions/fat-necrosis-and-oil-cysts-in-the-breast.html>] (American Cancer Society)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.cancer.org/es/cancer/tipos/cancer-de-seno/afecciones-no-cancerosas-de-los-senos/necrosis-grasa-y-quistes-oleosos-del-seno.html>]
- **Fibrocystic Changes in the Breast** [<https://www.cancer.org/cancer/types/breast-cancer/non-cancerous-breast-conditions/fibrosis-and-simple-cysts-in-the-breast.html>] (American Cancer Society)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.cancer.org/es/cancer/tipos/cancer-de-seno/afecciones-no-cancerosas-de-los-senos/fibrosis-y-quistes-simples-en-el-seno.html>]
- **Galactorrhea** [<https://familydoctor.org/condition/galactorrhea/?adfree=true>] (American Academy of Family Physicians)
Also in Spanish [<https://es.familydoctor.org/condicion/galactorrea-es/?adfree=true>]
- **Hyperplasia of the Breast** [<https://www.cancer.org/cancer/types/breast-cancer/non-cancerous-breast-conditions/hyperplasia-of-the-breast-ductal-or-lobular.html>] (American Cancer Society)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.cancer.org/es/cancer/tipos/cancer-de-seno/afecciones-no-cancerosas-de-los-senos/hiperplasia-del-seno-ductal-o-lobulillar.html>]
- **Lobular Carcinoma In Situ (LCIS)** [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/lobular-carcinoma-in-situ/symptoms-causes/syc-20374529?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/diseases-conditions/lobular-carcinoma-in-situ/symptoms-causes/syc-20374529?p=1>]
- **Mammary Duct Ectasia** [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/mammary-duct-ectasia/symptoms-causes/syc-20374801?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/diseases-conditions/mammary-duct-ectasia/symptoms-causes/syc-20374801?p=1>]
- **Mastitis** [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/mastitis/symptoms-causes/syc-20374829?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/diseases-conditions/mastitis/symptoms-causes/syc-20374829?p=1>]
- **Nipple Discharge** [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/symptoms/nipple-discharge/basics/definition/SYM-20050946?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/symptoms/nipple-discharge/basics/definition/SYM-20050946?p=1>]

Images

- **Nipple Dermatitis** [<https://skinsight.com/skin-conditions/nipple-dermatitis/?lmiw9cApl=1>] (VisualDX)
- **Supernumerary Nipple** [<https://skinsight.com/skin-conditions/supernumerary-nipple/?lmiw9cApl=1>] (VisualDX)

Clinical Trials

- ClinicalTrials.gov: **Breast Diseases** [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=%22Breast+Diseases%22&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)
- ClinicalTrials.gov: **Gynecomastia** [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=%22Gynecomastia%22&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)
- ClinicalTrials.gov: **Mastitis** [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=%22Mastitis%22&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)
- ClinicalTrials.gov: **Mastodynia** [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=%22Mastodynia%22&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)

Journal Articles

References and abstracts from MEDLINE/PubMed (National Library of Medicine)

- Article: Evaluation of ChatGPT-4 as an Online Outpatient Assistant in Puerperal Mastitis... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40705609>]

- Article: Clinical outcomes and recurrence predictors in breast abscess surgical management: A... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40696674>]
- Article: Analysis of Conventional Ultrasound and Contrast-Enhanced Ultrasound Features of Pseudoangiomatous Stromal... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40687941>]
- Breast Diseases -- see more articles [<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/?term=%22Breast+Diseases%22%5Bmajr%3Anoexp%5D+OR+%22Breast+Cyst%22%5Bmajr%3Anoexp%5D+OR+%22Mastodynia%22%5Bmajr%3Anoexp%5D+OR+%22Mastitis%22%5Bmajr%3Anoexp%5D+AND+humans%5Bmh%5D+AND+english%5Bla%5D+AND+%22last+1+Year%22+%5Bedat%5D+NOT+%28letter%5Bpt%5D+OR+case+reports%5Bpt%5D+OR+editorial%5Bpt%5D+OR+comment%5Bpt%5D%29+AND+free+full+text%5Bsb%5D+>]

Find an Expert

- American Cancer Society [<https://www.cancer.org/>]
- Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health [<https://womenshealth.gov/>]
Also in Spanish [<https://espanol.womenshealth.gov/>]
- How to Find Find an Ob-Gyn [<https://www.acog.org/womens-health/find-an-ob-gyn>]
(American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists)
- National Cancer Institute [<https://www.cancer.gov/>] 
Also in Spanish [<https://www.cancer.gov/espanol>]

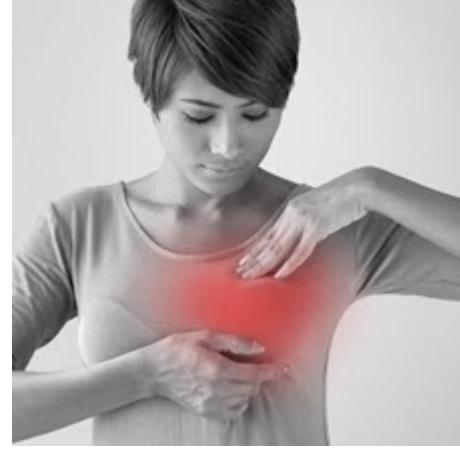
Teenagers

- Gynecomastia [<https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/boybrst.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/teens/boybrst.html>]
- Why Are My Breasts Different Sizes? [<https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/breast-size.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
- Why Are My Breasts Sore? [<https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/sore-breasts.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/teens/sore-breasts.html>]

Patient Handouts

- Breast biopsy - ultrasound [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007432.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/007432.htm>]
- Breast biopsy -- stereotactic [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007433.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/007433.htm>]
- Breast enlargement in males [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003165.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/003165.htm>]
- Breast infection [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001490.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/001490.htm>]
- Breast lump [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003155.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/003155.htm>]
- Breast MRI scan [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007360.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/007360.htm>]
- Breast pain [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003152.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/003152.htm>]
- Breast self-exam [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001993.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/001993.htm>]
- Breast skin and nipple changes [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000622.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/patientinstructions/000622.htm>]
- Fibroadenoma of the breast [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007216.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/007216.htm>]

- Fibrocystic breasts [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000912.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000912.htm>]
- Intraductal papilloma [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001238.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/001238.htm>]
- Nipple discharge [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001515.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/001515.htm>]
- Premenstrual breast changes [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003153.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/003153.htm>]



MEDICAL ENCYCLOPEDIA

- Aging changes in the breast [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003999.htm>]
- Breast biopsy - ultrasound [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007432.htm>]
- Breast biopsy -- stereotactic [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007433.htm>]
- Breast enlargement in males [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003165.htm>]
- Breast infection [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001490.htm>]
- Breast lump [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003155.htm>]
- Breast lump removal - series [https://medlineplus.gov/ency/presentations/100003_1.htm]
- Breast MRI scan [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007360.htm>]
- Breast pain [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003152.htm>]
- Breast self-exam [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001993.htm>]
- Breast skin and nipple changes [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000622.htm>]
- Breast ultrasound [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003379.htm>]
- Fibroadenoma of the breast [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007216.htm>]
- Fibrocystic breasts [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000912.htm>]
- Intraductal papilloma [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001238.htm>]
- Nipple discharge [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001515.htm>]
- Premenstrual breast changes [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003153.htm>]
- Subareolar abscess [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001501.htm>]
- Supernumerary nipples [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003110.htm>]
- Transillumination [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003389.htm>]

Related Health Topics

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Mammography [<https://medlineplus.gov/mammography.html>]

Other Languages

Find health information in languages other than English [<https://medlineplus.gov/languages/breastdiseases.html>] on *Breast Diseases*

NIH MedlinePlus Magazine

My Mammogram Was "Abnormal" What Do I do Next? [<https://magazine.medlineplus.gov/article/my-mammogram-was-abnormalwhat-do-i-do-next>]

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