

BREAST SELF EXAMINATION (BSE)

Regular breast self examination (BSE) is important for the early detection and treatment of breast cancer. It can help you to become familiar with your breasts and to identify any changes that might need to be checked.

When should I do BSE?

Once you are 40 years old, do BSE every month. If you still have periods, do BSE three to four days after your period ends. Otherwise choose a particular day of the month.

Getting ready to check your right breast

- lie on your *left* side with your knees bent;
- now lean back so that your shoulders are flat, twisting at the waist (don't move your legs);
- put your right hand behind you head; and
- use your left hand to check your right breast.

How to check each spot

- use the flat part of your fingers;
- move your fingers slowly in circles at each spot;



- at each spot, feel first with light pressure, then with firm pressure; and
- feel for a lump or thickening.

Check up and down in strips

- check your breast up and down in strips, beginning in your armpit;
- first, move your hand slowly down your breast;
- at the bottom of your breast, move your fingers across and start a new strip up your breast;
- continue moving your hand in strips, up and down your breast;
- when you reach your nipple, lie flat by twisting at the waist and straightening your legs;
- examine the rest of your breast in strips; and
- Bring your left arm down by your side and feel in your arm pit for lumps.

Checking your left breast

- lie on the *right* hand side with your knees bent;
- roll back by twisting at the waist so your shoulders are flat;
- put your left arm behind your head; and
- use your right hand to examine your left breast in the same way as for the right breast.

If you have a small breasts you can do BSE standing in the shower using the same method.

Carry out a mirror check

Undress and stand in front of a mirror.

Raise your arms above your head and look for:

- any changes in the size and shape of your breasts;
- any dimpling in the skin;
- any discharge from one of the nipples; and
- any change in your nipple such as a turned in nipple.

If you find a lump or thickening while examining your breast, see a doctor.

Other breast checks

Once you are 40, it's a good idea to have your breasts examined by your doctor.

If you are over 50, Breast Screening Tasmania recommends you have a mammogram every two years.

Sexual Health Service Tasmania is staffed Monday to Friday from 8.30 am until 5.00 pm. Clinic times vary from site to site so please contact your local office for details (see contact details on the back of this pamphlet).

**Sexual Health Service
Clinical Services**

HOBART

60 Collins Street
Hobart 7000
Ph: (03) 6233 3557

LAUNCESTON

42 Canning Street
Launceston 7250
Ph: (03) 6336 2216

DEVONPORT

23 Steele Street
Devonport 7310
Ph: (03) 6421 7759

BURNIE

11 Jones Street
BURNIE 7320
Ph: (03) 6434 6315

**SEXUAL HEALTH SERVICE
A joint Australian and State
Government Program**

The Royal Hobart Hospital is Tasmania's largest hospital and provides a number of state-wide services including cardiothoracic surgery, neurosurgery, burns management, hyperbaric and diving medicine, neonatal intensive care and high-risk obstetrics. It is the major teaching and research hospital for the State and works closely with the University of Tasmania.

Many students in the health care professions are taught within the Hospital, and gaining skills in examining and interviewing patients is an important part of their education and training. We ask for your co-operation and encourage you to participate in our teaching and research activities. Your permission is required for participation.

The Royal Hobart Hospital encourages feedback from patients, relatives and visitors. This feedback helps staff to better understand the needs of patients and provide the best possible patient care.



**The Royal Hobart Hospital
is a smoke-free site**

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**Information
Pamphlet**

Sexual
Health
SERVICE

**Breast Self
Examination**