

**OCTOBER WAS BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH**

Breast cancer ... it's a scary thought and all too many women assume that it won't happen to them. Fact is though, every ten minutes a woman is diagnosed with breast cancer in the UK.

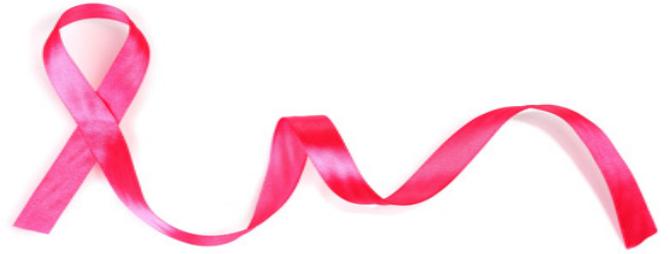
Early signs of breast cancer can be a lump in a breast, a painful breast or armpit, or a discharge from the nipple. Even if none of these symptoms present themselves, a doctor should be visited to be sure. A doctor will most likely perform a manual exam and send you for a mammogram. A mammogram examination is painless and only takes about ten minutes

Mammography is performed on an outpatient basis.

During mammography, a specially qualified radiologic technologist will position your breast in the mammography unit. Your breast will be placed on a special platform and compressed with a clear plastic paddle. The technologist will gradually compress your breast.

Breast compression is necessary in order to:

- Even out the breast thickness so that all of the tissue can be visualized.
- Spread out the tissue so that small abnormalities are less likely to be hidden by overlying breast tissue.
- Allow the use of a lower x-ray dose since a thinner amount of breast tissue is being imaged.



- Hold the breast still in order to minimize blurring of the image caused by motion.
- Reduce x-ray scatter to increase sharpness of picture.

The examination process should take about 30 minutes.

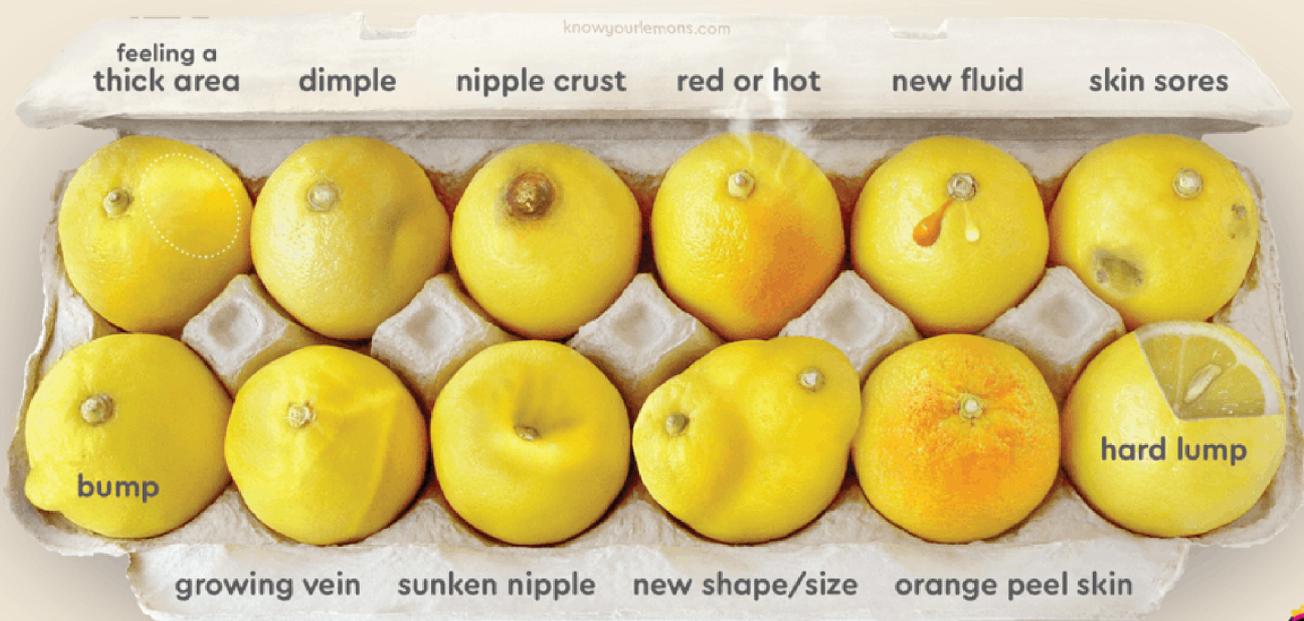
If any of these symptoms do present themselves there's no need to panic. Plenty of time, pain or a lump in a breast can be perfectly harmless. The pain can be a sign of a cyst or the lump can be benign. It's always better to be sure though.

If the mammogram shows a lump, your doctor will order a biopsy. This test will show if the lump is benign (harmless) or malignant (cancerous). If the lump is cancerous there's still no reason to panic. Early detection is a life saver. By way of a simple operation the lump is removed after which the doctor will discuss further options with you.

If you've never had a mammogram, make an appointment. You can take a friend or family member with you and afterward you'll have peace of mind.

**WHAT BREAST CANCER CAN LOOK & FEEL LIKE**

Recognize something? Don't panic, some changes are normal. But if it stays around be smart—show a doctor.



**"A cancerous lump usually feels hard and immovable like a lemon seed. It can be any shape or size."**

