

## Breast and Testicular Self-Exams – Why and How Often?

**Why perform a self-exam?** Three words...“early cancer detection”. Early detection means more treatment options and a better chance of recovery. Women and men should know how their breasts and testicles *normally* look and feel. Since everyone is different, regular breast and testicular self-exams are the best way to get a “feel” for what is normal for *you*! Self-exams are also an important way to recognize changes that may be cause for concern. Lumps or other changes found during self-exams are not always cancer, but you should book an appointment with your healthcare provider as soon as possible if you notice something unusual. Remember, even women with breast implants and men can develop breast cancer.

**How often?** Women should begin breast self-exams at the age of 20. The best time to perform a breast self-exam is about a week after the start of your period when breasts are least likely to be tender or swollen. Women should also have a clinical breast exam by a healthcare professional at least once every 3 years from the age of 20 to 39. Once a woman turns 40, she should schedule a clinical breast exam and a mammogram every year.

Testicular cancer can occur at any age, but is most common in men ages 20 to 35. Starting at the age of 15, men should perform a monthly testicular self-exam. Regular self-exams are important, but cannot substitute for physical exams by your healthcare provider.