Breast Cancer - Symptoms and Signs

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Symptoms and Signs

ON THIS PAGE: You will find out more about body changes and other things that can signal a problem that may need medical care. To see other pages, use the menu on the side of your screen.

Women with breast cancer may experience breast changes or symptoms, but many women do not show any of these signs or symptoms when diagnosed. Many times, breast signs or symptoms can be caused by a medical condition that is not cancer.

The signs and symptoms that should be discussed with a doctor include:

- Lumps that feel like a hard knot or a thickening in the breast or under the arm.
- Change in the size or shape of the breast
- Nipple discharge that occurs suddenly, is bloody, or occurs in only one breast.
- Physical changes, such as a nipple turned inward or a persistent sore in the nipple area
- Skin irritation or changes, such as puckering, dimpling, scaliness, or new creases
- Warm, red, swollen breasts with or without a rash resembling the skin of an orange, called peau d'orange
- Pain in the breast, particularly breast pain that doesn?t go away. Pain is not usually a symptom of breast cancer, but it should be reported to a doctor.

If you are concerned about one or more symptoms or signs on this list, please talk with your doctor. You doctor will ask how long and how often you?ve been experiencing the symptom(s), in addition to other questions. This is to help find out the cause of the problem, called a diagnosis [2].

If cancer is diagnosed, relieving symptoms is an important part of cancer care and treatment. This may also be called symptom management, supportive care, or palliative care. Be sure to talk with your health care team about symptoms you experience, including any new symptoms or a change in symptoms.

The next section helps explain what tests and scans may be needed to learn more about the cause of the symptoms. Use the menu on the side of your screen to select Diagnosis, or you can select another section, to continue reading this guide.

Links:
[1] http://www.cancer.net/about-us
[2] http://www.cancer.net/node/18624