



Testing and Early Diagnosis

Symptoms of Breast Cancer

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Maria What are some of the symptoms of breast cancer?

Dr. Medhavi So firstly I would say, even though American Cancer Society and other societies do not recommend regular self breast exams as a screening modality, even then it is important for woman to know what their regular breasts look like and feel like. Some of the things to look out for would be — I would say the most common way a breast cancer can present is — a lump, or a mass. Besides the lump, patients may have changes in the nipple, it could be in the form of a discharge, or the nipple may get inverted. Any skin changes such as redness, flakiness, if you have any swelling either of a portion of the breast or the whole breast, any pain either in the nipple or the breast that's not going away, any swollen lymph nodes either in the upper parts on the breast or in the armpit. If you have any of these symptoms, it's very important that you talk to your medical team, get checked by them, and get appropriate imaging as soon as possible. I would also want to say that having any of these symptoms does not automatically mean that you have cancer, because there are a lot of other conditions in the breast which are not cancerous, but they may lead to any of the changes that I described about.