

Breast cancer

A cancer that forms in the cells of the breasts.

Common

More than 200,000 US cases per year

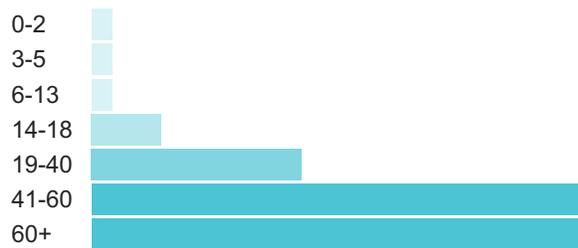
-  Treatable by a medical professional
-  Requires a medical diagnosis
-  Lab tests or imaging always required

Breast cancer can occur in women and rarely in men.

Symptoms of breast cancer include a lump in the breast, bloody discharge from the nipple, and changes in the shape or texture of the nipple or breast.

Treatment depends on the stage of cancer. It may consist of chemotherapy, radiation, and surgery.

Ages affected



Genders affected



Symptoms

Requires a medical diagnosis

Symptoms of breast cancer include a lump in the breast, bloody discharge from the nipple, and changes in the shape or texture of the nipple or breast.

Can have no symptoms, but people may experience:

Breast: discomfort, inverted nipple, lumps, or nipple discharge

Also common: redness or swollen lymph nodes

Treatments

Treatment depends on stage

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Surgery

Mammoplasty: Plastic surgery to increase or reduce the size of the breasts, or to reconstruct a breast.

Tissue expansion: Inserting a balloon under the skin and then gradually expanding it to stretch and grow the skin and surrounding tissue.

Lymph node dissection: Surgical removal of a lymph node.

Lumpectomy: Surgical removal of a lump (tumor) in the breast.

Mastectomy: Surgical removal of some or all of the breast.

Medical procedure

Teletherapy: Radiation therapy that uses x-rays or other high-energy beams to destroy cancer cells and shrink tumors.

Radiation therapy: Treatment that uses x-rays and other high-energy rays to kill abnormal cells.

Medications

Estrogen modulator: Mimics the effect of estrogen on various tissues, including the breast, bones, and reproductive organs.

- Tamoxifen (Soltamox)
- Exemestane (Aromasin)

Chemotherapy: Kills cells that are growing or multiplying too quickly.

- Pertuzumab (Perjeta)
- Trastuzumab (Herceptin)
- Fulvestrant (Faslodex)
- Fluorouracil (Efudex, Fluoroplex, Carac, Adrucil, and Tolak)
- Cyclophosphamide
- Capecitabine (Xeloda)
- Epirubicin (Ellence)
- Docetaxel anhydrous (Docefrez and Taxotere)
- Paclitaxel (Abraxane)

Hormone based chemotherapy: Treats hormone sensitive cancers.

- Anastrozole (Arimidex)
- Goserelin (Zoladex)
- Letrozole (Femara)

Bone health: Helps strengthen and build bones.

- Denosumab (Xgeva and Prolia)
- Zoledronic acid (Reclast)

Specialists

Oncologist: Specializes in cancer.

Radiation oncologist: Treats and manages cancer by prescribing radiation therapy.

Primary care provider (PCP): Prevents, diagnoses, and treats diseases.

Plastic surgeon: Reconstructs defective, damaged, or missing body parts.

Surgeon: Performs operations to treat disease.

Consult a doctor for medical advice

Note: The information you see describes what usually happens with a medical condition, but doesn't apply to everyone. This information isn't medical advice, so make sure to contact a healthcare provider if you have a medical problem. If you think you may have a medical emergency, call your doctor or a emergency number immediately.

Sources: Mayo Clinic and others. [Learn more](#)