

MANAGING YOUR BREAST CANCER: FOR MEN



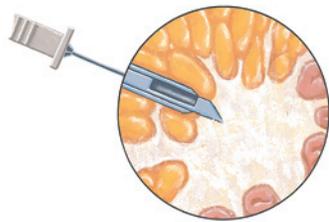
Male breast cancer is rare. It accounts for about 1% of all breast cancers, with about 2000 cases diagnosed each year. It's most common in men 60 to 70 years old and most often occurs as a type of breast cancer known as infiltrating ductal carcinoma.



The most common symptom is a painless lump that can be felt, just below the nipple. Changes near the nipple include skin ulcers, puckering, or dimpling; redness or scaling of the nipple or skin; nipple inversion; and nipple discharge.

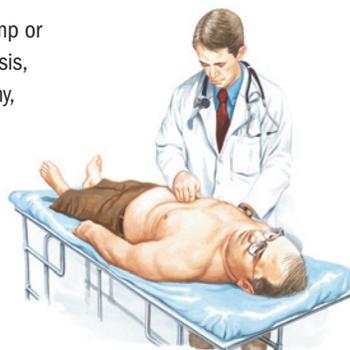


Ultrasonography



Needle biopsy

Men (or doctors) may feel a lump or see breast changes. For diagnosis, doctors will order mammography, ultrasonography, and biopsy.



What Is Breast Cancer?

Male breast cancer is rare. It accounts for about 1% of all breast cancers, with about 2000 cases diagnosed each year. It's most common in men 60 to 70 years old and most often occurs as a type of breast cancer known as infiltrating ductal carcinoma. Greater risk of having breast cancer is related to radiation exposure, high estrogen levels, and family history of breast cancer. Abnormal breast cancer genes (BRCA1 or BCRA2) can increase risk, as can liver disease, being overweight, and drinking alcohol in excess.

Survival for men is similar to that for women with the same cancer stage at diagnosis. Staging means finding out how much cancer spread. Men are often diagnosed at a later stage and may be less likely to be cured.

What Are the Symptoms of Breast Cancer?

Men usually have a breast lump that can be felt, the most common sign. It usually presents as a painless mass or swelling, just below the nipple or in the breast or chest wall. Changes near the nipple include skin ulcers, skin puckering or dimpling, redness or scaling of the nipple or skin, inversion (turning inward) of the nipple, and bloody or opaque nipple discharge.

Most breast lumps in males are not cancerous and are a sign of gynecomastia (swelling of breasts with age and obesity).

How Is Breast Cancer Diagnosed?

Men (or doctors) may feel a lump or see breast changes. Doctors may order mammography, ultrasonography, and biopsy. In a biopsy, cells are removed for study with a microscope. Tests may be done for hormone (estrogen, progesterone) receptors and a protein (HER2). In about 30% of cases, HER2 makes cancer cells grow.

Breast cancer in men is staged just as in women. For staging, doctors use x-rays, computed tomography (CT), magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), positron emission tomography (PET), and biopsy results.



Surgery, usually lumpectomy or modified radical mastectomy, is the most common first treatment. Chemotherapy, radiation therapy, hormone therapy, monoclonal antibodies, and biological therapy (immunotherapy) are also used. Prognosis depends mainly on tumor stage, as in women, but men do better than women with hormone therapy.

Eat a diet with enough calories. You may need supplemental nutritional drinks. Get enough fluids. Eat soups if drinking water is a problem.



Don't smoke or drink alcohol in excess.



Don't miss follow-up doctor appointments. Find local support groups to help you handle your disease.

How Is Breast Cancer Treated?

Surgery, usually lumpectomy or modified radical mastectomy, is the most common first treatment. With mastectomy, the breast, lymph nodes (glands), and sometimes chest wall muscles are removed. Lumpectomy involves removing the cancer and area surrounding it.

Chemotherapy, radiation therapy, and hormone therapy are also given, alone or together. Chemotherapy uses drugs to kill cancer cells or stop them from dividing. Hormone therapy stops hormones, especially estrogen, from helping cancer cells grow. Prognosis depends mainly on tumor stage, as in women, but men respond better than women to hormone therapy.

Radiotherapy uses high-energy x-rays to kill cancer cells.

Other treatments include monoclonal antibodies and biological therapy (immunotherapy). Monoclonal antibodies attack and block the HER2 protein and kill cancer cells. Biological therapy gets the body's immune (infection-fighting) system to kill cancer cells.

DOs and DON'Ts in Managing Breast Cancer:

- ✓ **DO** take medicines if suggested by your doctor.
- ✓ **DO** find local support groups to help you handle your disease.
- ✓ **DO** visit your doctor regularly.
- ✓ **DO** maintain a healthy body weight. Eat a diet with enough calories, or maybe use supplemental drinks.
- ✓ **DO** get enough fluids.
- ⊗ **DON'T** smoke.
- ⊗ **DON'T** drink alcohol in excess.

FROM THE DESK OF

NOTES

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact the following sources:

- American Cancer Society
Website: <http://www.cancer.org>
- National Comprehensive Cancer Network
Website: <http://www.nccn.org>