

Sultan Qaboos Comprehensive Cancer Care & Research Centre

Breast Cancer Program

Breast pain

Prepared By: Dr.Adil Al Ajmi - Ms. Zamzam Al Habsi

Breast pain can cause a lot of anxiety, and many women worry that they have breast cancer. Breast pain alone is not usually a sign of breast cancer and is much more likely to be either a benign (not cancer) breast condition or chest wall pain due to other factors.

Types of breast pain

Breast pain is very common in women of all ages. There are three types of breast pain, two of which are 'true' breast pain, as in affecting the breast tissue, and one of which is referred pain coming from elsewhere in the body, but which is felt in the breast.

1- Cyclical breast pain.

Breast pain that is part of a woman's normal Menstrual cycle (periods). Cyclical breast pain is linked to changing hormone levels during the menstrual cycle, but the exact causes are unknown. Approximately two out of three women will experience cyclical breast pain at some time in their lives.

2- Non-cyclical breast pain.

Some women have lasting pain in the breast that is not related to the menstrual cycle. Having severe, long-lasting breast pain can sometimes affect a woman's daily activities which may cause anxiety and, for some, depression but this isn't the case for most women and their pain can be helped or managed.

Treatment

- 1- Wearing a supportive and well-fitted bra, during the day, during any physical activity and at night can be helpful.
- 2- Your GP may also recommend reducing caffeine and kola, eating a low-fat diet which some women find helpful in reducing breast pain.
- 3- Aerobic exercise.
- 4- Stop smoking
- 5- Using some prescribed drugs like Tamoxifen and Danazol that effect on certain hormones.

Breast self-examination should be performed regularly. Inform your doctor if you noted any change in your breasts.