

Fibrocystic Breast Changes: Care Instructions

Your Care Instructions

Fibrocystic breast changes cause many small lumps to form in your breast. Some areas of your breast may feel thicker or denser than other areas. Your breasts also may feel sore or tender.

You may notice lumps in both breasts around the nipple and in the upper, outer part of the breasts, especially before your menstrual period. The lumps may come and go and change size in just a few days.

Fibrocystic breast changes are normal and are not cancer. Treatment is not usually needed. If you have a hard, grainy lump, unusual pain, or nipple discharge, your doctor may order tests to look for a more serious problem. Talk to your doctor about the need for regular mammograms.

Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment and safety. Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if you are having problems. It's also a good idea to know your test results and keep a list of the medicines you take.

How can you care for yourself at home?

- Take an over-the-counter pain medicine, such as acetaminophen (Tylenol), ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin), or naproxen (Aleve). Read and follow all instructions on the label.
- Do not take two or more pain medicines at the same time unless the doctor told you to. Many pain medicines have acetaminophen, which is Tylenol. Too much acetaminophen (Tylenol) can be harmful.
- Wear a supportive bra, such as a sports bra or jog bra.
- You may want to limit caffeine. Some women say that cutting back on caffeine reduces breast tenderness.
- A diet very low in fat (about 15% of daily diet) may reduce breast tenderness. Talk to your doctor about whether you should try a very low-fat diet.

When should you call for help?

Watch closely for changes in your health, and be sure to contact your doctor if:

- You do not get better as expected.
- Your breast has changed.
- You have pain in your breast.
- You have a discharge from your nipple.
- A breast lump changes or does not go away.

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