

BREAST AWARENESS/EXAMINATION TECHNIQUES - NOTES

- Get to know your breasts – their normal feel and look so that you can detect any changes early
- Check once a month – pop a note in your diary/phone to remind you
- If you still have periods, examine just after your period has finished
- If you don't have periods, it can be done any time of the month
- Breast examination technique is the same for everyone – pre and post mastectomy, with or without reconstruction and with any type of reconstruction
- Use the pads of your fingers, **not** the tips or palm of your hand
- Use different pressure levels – gentle, then more pressure
- Take your time examining
- Follow the same pattern each time so that you don't miss any of part of your breasts out
- Stand in front of a mirror
- Look at outline of breasts (from side and front) so you don't miss any parts
- Inspect your nipples – any changes, redness, discharge, pain?
- Gently raise your arms
- Are the contours smooth?
- Any dimpling of the skin?
- Any tethering?
- Gently massage with small circular movements
- Feel right up to armpit
- Imagine breast as a clock – start at 12.00 pm and finish at 12.00 pm, going round each part of breast
- Feel right up to your clavicle and from the nipple and outwards direction
- Examine when you're in the shower, using soap so your fingers glide easily across the skin
- Examine when lying on the bed too, using same 'clock' technique as above.

DO GET CHECKED OUT IF YOU ARE AT ALL WORRIED ABOUT A CHANGE IN YOUR BREASTS – DON'T SIT THERE WORRYING WHEN IT'S PROBABLY NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT AT ALL!

