



Breast Treatment Associates

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Breast Pain

Breast pain is a common complaint among women. Nearly 70% of women will experience some form of breast pain in their lives. There are many possible causes of breast pain. Although many women with pain in their breast understandably fear breast cancer, breast pain is NOT a common symptom of cancer.

Some of the possible causes of breast pain are:

- ◆ Hormone changes during your period
- ◆ Water retention
- ◆ Injury to the breast
- ◆ Pregnancy
- ◆ Mastitis (an infection in the breast)
- ◆ Costochondritis (this does not actually occur in the breast, however it may feel as if the pain is originating in the breast)
- ◆ Musculoskeletal pain
- ◆ Rarely it can be an indication of a more serious medical condition

Usually, a physician will perform a clinical breast exam, and if necessary order additional breast imaging exams (such as mammogram, MRI, or ultrasound) to help determine if the breast pain is related to another breast condition, or possibly cancer (again, breast pain is not a common symptom of breast cancer).

Most women with moderate breast pain are not treated with medical or surgical procedures. The following suggestions have been shown to reduce breast pain in some women:

- ◆ Wear a good supportive bra to reduce breast movement. Or, if your bra is constricting or rubbing an area of the breast, try a different bra.
- ◆ Limit sodium intake
- ◆ Reduce caffeine intake (coffee, tea, soft-drinks, chocolate)

Practice Limited to Medical Surgical Diseases of the Breast

American Society of Breast Disease • Society of Surgical Oncology • Southwest Surgical Congress • American College of Surgeons Oncology Group
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- ◆ Take vitamins. Some women have found that Vitamin B6 and Vitamin E helps to relieve the pain
- ◆ Occasionally use of over-the-counter pain-relief drugs such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen
- ◆ Try evening primrose oil
- ◆ Relax. Some breast pain can be caused by stress and may subside by reducing anxiety and tension

Most of the time, breast pain goes away on its own within a few months.