

## A follow-up program?

It is important for you to receive regular check-ups after your breast cancer treatment ends. A follow-up program allows you to bring any concerns you have to the attention of a medical professional and may help find cancer early should it return.

- Your family doctor is a key person in your follow-up program. If you have new symptoms or concerns, first visit your family doctor, and he/she will give you a referral if needed.
- In most cases, you will not need extra tests during family doctor visits, unless there is a new concern.

### If you are participating in a special research study:

Your follow-up plan may be different. If so, your oncologist will discuss this with you.

## For more information:



Please contact:

**BC Cancer Agency Pharmacy**  
or visit the BCCA website at  
<http://www.bccancer.bc.ca>

**Centre for the Southern Interior**  
250.712.3952 or  
1.888.563.7773 ext. 3952

**Fraser Valley Centre**  
604.930.4002 or  
1.800.523.2885 ext. 4002

**Vancouver Centre**  
604.877.6135 or  
1.800.663.6000 ext. 6135

**Vancouver Island Centre**  
250.370.8247 or  
1.800.670.3322 ext. 8247

## Your follow-up program

- 1) Do BSE (breast self exam) every month.
- 2) Follow-up care should be done by your family doctor.
- 3) Your next physical exam should be:  
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and every six months after this for five years.
- 4) Your next mammogram should be:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
and once a year after this.
- 5) Your bone density scan should be:  
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and repeated 18 - 24 months after this.

## Additional tests

The BC Cancer Agency does not recommend tumour marker tests for people who are healthy after treatment. If you develop any new symptoms or concerns, please tell your family doctor. Make sure to remind him/her of your past history of breast cancer.



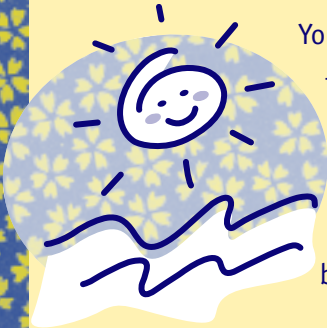
**BC Cancer Agency**  
CARE & RESEARCH  
An agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority

# Follow-up Program after Breast Cancer Treatments



## You are part of the team!

Your team is made up of your oncologist, family doctor, pharmacist, and other health care providers.



You are also part of this team. You can take an active role in your care. Your program begins with:

- Monthly breast self-examination (BSE). BSE can help to detect changes in your breasts. It is the best way to know what is normal for you. If you find a change, visit your family doctor as soon as you can.

For more information on learning breast self-examination, ask your health care professional or family doctor.

## If you have had breast conserving surgery (lumpectomy):

- After your treatment ends, visit your family doctor every six months for the first five years. Your doctor will examine your breasts and the lymph node areas.
- Once a year (starting six months after your treatment ends), you should have a mammogram of both breasts.
- After the fifth year, continue to visit your family doctor once a year for follow-up and to set up an annual mammogram.

## If you have had a mastectomy:

- After your treatment ends, visit your family doctor every six months for the first five years. Your doctor will examine your breast, the mastectomy scar, chest wall and lymph node areas.
- Once a year you should have a mammogram of the remaining breast.
- After the fifth year, continue to visit your family doctor once a year for follow-up and to set up an annual mammogram.

## If you have been put on hormone therapy:

For people with early stage breast cancer, hormone therapy is taken for at least five years.

In some cases, hormone therapy may be prescribed for a longer time.

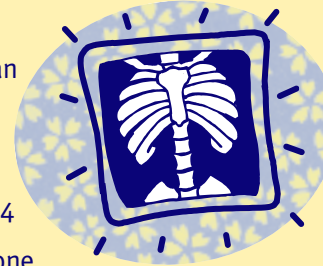


Hormone therapy drugs are covered by the BC Cancer Agency.

- The BC Cancer Agency's regional cancer centres provide the first supply of this medication, during your last visit.
- For refills, your family doctor will write out a prescription to get the medication from either a BC Cancer Agency pharmacy or your local hospital pharmacy.

## Aromatase Inhibitors (AI)

If you are taking hormone therapies such as aromatase inhibitors (Arimidex®, Femara®, Aromasin®), you will need to have a bone density scan on a regular basis.



- A bone density scan is usually taken at baseline and then repeated at 18 – 24 months. Further bone scans are done depending on the results of the initial tests.
- Your family doctor should send you for a baseline lipid/cholesterol screen and may want to monitor your levels every 6-12 months if clinically indicated.
- A daily total of 1500 mg of calcium and 800 IU of vitamin D are recommended. This can come from a mix of both food and vitamin supplements.
- Weight bearing exercise at least 3 times a week is strongly recommended.