

# SPIRITED WOMEN'S NETWORK

EMPOWER. SUPPORT. CONNECT.



"Whoever thought up the word 'mammogram'? Every time I hear it, I think I'm supposed to put my breast in an envelope and send it to someone."

By Jan King

## In This Issue..

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What Is Breast Cancer?

## What's new On The Website?

### Stories

**Artist** – Forming the Female

**Business-** Highlighting Health Professionals

**Community** – Clicking into Community

### Links –

[www.kindness.com.au](http://www.kindness.com.au)  
[www.acomplaintfreeworld.org](http://www.acomplaintfreeworld.org)  
[www.fistualfoundation.org](http://www.fistualfoundation.org)

## Keeping Abreast – October Edition 2009

October has traditionally become Pinktober in aid of breast cancer awareness. I think just about every woman knows of another who has had to battle with this disease. When we think of the breasts we are reminded of what a symbol of our femininity they are, but they also symbolize nurturing. I understand that there are many factors that contribute to the development of cancer but I wonder if breast cancer is so rampant in today's society because we often don't have or make the time to self nurture? Do we take enough care in our own wellbeing? When was the last time you did a breast examination? Breast cancer is indiscriminate. Take the time, prevention is better than cure.

*Natalie*

## When To Breast Self Exam? Stick It On Your To Do List.

By Suzanne Early

Self breast exam, isn't necessary is it? Oh yes it is. Absolutely. Regular BSE can help you find changes early, and need not be a long, drawn out, dreaded process. So, do you know when to do yours?

First, let me briefly recap with the "how to" question.

### How To Do A Breast Examination

- Stand in front of the mirror, arms at sides, view all angles of your chest.
- Standing, raise your arms, looking at all the area in the mirror.
- Hands on hips, looking in the mirror, slowly lean forward, checking as you go.
- One arm over the back of your head.
- Use three finger pads of the opposite hand.
- Do circular massaging movements over your breast.
- Apply different pressure, light, medium and firm.
- Do varying sized circular massaging motions, small to larger.
- Go over the entire area in a grid type pattern.
- Feel the surrounding areas.
- Check the area leading to up to your armpit, checking for swollen lymph nodes.
- Examine your armpit.
- Squeeze your nipple.
- Examine your nipple.
- Do your examination lying down as well, repeating the above process.

### When To Do My BSE?

The best time to do a self breast exam is the week following your period. Why? Because leading up to your period, due to hormonal changes, you may be very tender. I know I am! Most other women I have spoken to, seem to have the same problem. Sore breasts are a common issue for women all over the world. Because of your breast tenderness due to your cycle, the last thing you want to do around this time, is an exam! Yes, I can relate to that!

Not only could it be uncomfortable, but you may have hormonal lumps or cysts, that later disappear, once your period has finished. If you were to do a breast examination at this time, not only could you experience discomfort, but you might be alarmed and confused by feeling various breast lumps, that would eventually

## Events –

Braces Day  
Working Women's  
Workshop  
7 Keys to love & abundance  
connection  
The art of public speaking  
Parenting from the inside  
out training  
Sunshine Coast Business  
Expo  
Be Yourself retreat  
What Women Want wealth  
creation  
Go M.A.D in Vanuatu  
(For more details go to the  
events calendar on the  
home page)

## Competition –

The winner of  
'EMPOWERED WEALTH  
STRATEGIES, SECRETS  
TO FINANCIAL FREEDOM'  
is Jenny. Congratulations.

## This Month's Recipe

### Chicken breasts baked in foil packets with a bread crumb and walnut dressing mixture.

Cook Time: 55 minutes

Ingredients:

- 4 boneless chicken breast  
halves
- lemon juice
- 6 tablespoons melted  
butter
- 3 cups bread crumbs,  
toasted
- 1/3 cup finely chopped  
onion
- 1/2 cup chopped celery
- 2 teaspoons parsley flakes
- 3/4 cup chopped walnuts
- 1/2 teaspoon seasoned salt
- seasoned salt and pepper

Preparation:

Mix together bread crumbs,  
half of the melted butter,  
onion, celery, parsley,  
walnuts, 1/2 teaspoon  
seasoned salt, and enough  
water to moisten. Lay out 4  
squares of aluminum foil,

disappear. You might panic, thinking that you have signs of breast cancer, when in fact it could be your regular cycle, doing its regular thing.

So a good idea is to do a self breast exam about a week after your period has ended. Then you are less likely to have tenderness and hormonal lumps. If you feel you need support in doing your routine, ask your partner to assist you.

### No Periods?

What happens if you don't have periods? I suggest you pick a day of the month that is easy for you to remember. Perhaps the first of the month? It doesn't really matter as long as each month you do your self breast exam on the same date. It makes it easier to remember to do, and to be honest, those months come around fast! Does that mean I am getting old?

### Be A Note Taker

Get your calendar out ladies and keep track of your cycle and examinations. Perhaps get a notebook and write down your period dates and when you did your BSE. This way you can take notes on any areas where you are tender, felt a lump, noticed a rash, breast discharge, swelling, indentations, puckering, or any other signs of cancer.

I am not a Doctor, however if I was one, and a woman came to me with a notebook containing helpful information about her breast self exam, it would make my job a lot easier!

So girls do yourself a favour. Next time you are shopping, why not buy yourself a lovely notebook and start being a note taker. Take full control of your health. Do regular breast examinations each month, then write down anything about your exam that would be helpful to yourself, or your Doctor. Then take yourself out for coffee!

Suzanne Early

<http://www.early-detection-for-breast-cancer.com/breast-examination.html>

Suzie likes to share down to earth, easy to understand information on breast cancer basics, with warmth and sensitivity. She is passionate about encouraging women to do regular breast examination, and advises how and when to perform one. Having a friend with breast cancer and a career in Adult Education, Suzie understands how important it is to share and learn about this women's issue, in the hope that other women will be encouraged and empower themselves, becoming proactive in their breast health and do breast self exam. Early detection is key!

## What is breast cancer?

Breast cancer is the most common form of cancer-related death in women in Australia. Around one in 10 women will be diagnosed with this disease. Although it can affect all adult women, it is very uncommon under the age of 30 and the risk increases with age. About one third of breast cancers occur in women under the age of 50, and about one quarter in women 70 years and over.

Today, thanks to recent developments in prevention, detection and treatment of breast cancer, and continuing clinical trials research, more women than ever before are surviving breast cancer long term.

### What is breast cancer?

The human body is made up of cells. Normally your body's cells divide and grow in an ordered way – that is how your body grows and heals itself. Cancer occurs when these cells start to divide in an uncontrolled manner. Over time these cells form a lump or "tumour". Tumours are either benign (non-cancerous) or malignant (cancerous). Breast cancer usually appears in the cells which make up breast glands and most tumours start in the milk ducts. If found early, and treated promptly, most women with breast cancer can lead a normal life.

### Breast cancer risk factors

#### Being a woman

Simply because you are female, you are at a greater risk of developing breast cancer. As many as 80 per cent of women who are diagnosed will have no known additional risk factors.

double thickness, and butter generously. Make a mound of stuffing on each buttered square of foil then place on baking sheet.

Brush both sides of the chicken with lemon juice then with the remaining butter. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Fold foil up over the chicken to make individual package. Bake at 350° for 40 minutes. Open packages to expose chicken and bake 15 minutes

## This Month's Poem

### Her Breast Is Fit For Pearls

by Emily Dickinson

Her breast is fit for pearls,

But I was not a "Diver" --

Her brow is fit for thrones

But I have not a crest.

Her heart is fit for home --

I -- a Sparrow -- build there

Sweet of twigs and twine

My perennial nest.

## Breast of Reading...

### Spirited Women: Journeys with Breast Cancer

By Petrea King

### Savage Breast: A Man's Search for the Goddess

By Tim Ward

#### Your age

As you grow older, your risk increases. Breast cancer is uncommon among women under the age of 40, but the risk increases after the age of 50 among post-menopausal women. Over 70 per cent of breast cancers are diagnosed in women over 50.

#### Family history

Most women who develop breast cancer have no family history of the disease. However, a woman's risk increases if she has close relatives diagnosed – either on her mother's or father's side.

If you have had breast cancer before

A woman who has had breast cancer, compared with women who have never had the disease, is at an increased risk of developing it again – either in the same breast or the other breast. So long term follow up is important.

#### Genetics

Researchers have found that changes or mutations to two specific genes (BRCA1 AND BRCA2) increase a woman's risk significantly. These changes can be detected by genetic screening and doctors can suggest treatments to delay or prevent breast cancer from developing. Recently, new genes associated with breast cancer have been discovered.

#### Oestrogen

The female hormone, oestrogen, also has a role. Girls who begin menstruating early, or women who have a late menopause may be at a greater risk. Women who have no children and those who have their first child after age 30 may also be at a higher risk. Long term Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) increases risk.

#### Lifestyle

If you eat a diet high in fats and low in fresh fruit and vegetables, if you are overweight, or if you drink too much alcohol, you are putting yourself at greater risk of developing breast cancer.

#### Being sedentary

Research shows that women who are physically active and maintain a healthy body weight have a lower risk of breast cancer. In fact, regular exercise may reduce a woman's risk by 30 per cent or more.

#### Breast changes

It is important to be aware of the normal look and feel of your breasts and to report any unusual and persistent breast changes promptly.

The earlier breast cancer is detected, the best chance of cure.

If you experience any of these symptoms, particularly if they persist for several weeks, see your doctor as soon as possible:

- Lumps or a thickening under the skin of the breast.
- Discharge from the nipple.
- Any change to the shape or texture of the nipple.
- Any change to the texture of the skin of the breast such as dimpling or puckering.
- Underarm tenderness or persistent, unusual pain.

Any change in the size or shape of the breast.

But remember, the majority of breast changes are not breast cancer.

Women over the age of 40 are eligible for a free two yearly mammogram with BreastScreen Australia. This is particularly important for women over 50.

Call 13 20 50 to make an appointment today.