commit: Breast Self-Examination

learn. love. commit.

learn about your breast cancer risks.
love your body.
commit to regular preventive health screenings.

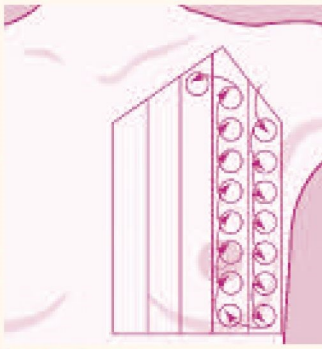
healthy women
informed. empowered.

The Learn. Love. Commit. Campaign is supported by an educational grant from Eli Lilly, & Co.

Breast self-examination (BSE), performed at the same time each month, takes little time, costs nothing and can help you be aware of how your breasts normally look and feel.

Contact your health care professional if you discover any changes. Breast self-exams are not a substitute for regular breast exams by a health care professional or for screening mammograms.

Touch. Use the pads of your three middle fingers. Begin in your armpit, using small circular motions with varying degrees of pressure, to examine your entire breast area.



BSE Grid. Move your fingers up and down over your entire breast area, from the collar-bone to below the breast and side-to-side, from your breast bone to your arm pit.

1. Stand in front of a mirror. Examine your breasts with hands at sides, then clasped overhead. Look for changes in size or shape, or nipple changes. Squeeze both nipples between thumb and forefinger to check for discharge. Then press hands on hips and push elbows forward to tighten chest muscles. Look for dimpling, puckering, redness, scaliness or changes in shape, size, texture or skin color.

2. In the shower. BSE is easier when your skin is wet and soapy. In the shower, raise your right arm above your head. Think about the BSE grid as you cover your entire breast area, using the "touch technique" described above. Repeat for left side.

3. Lying down. Lying down helps to flatten the breast, making it easier to examine the breast tissue by pressing it firmly against the chest wall. Place a pillow under right shoulder. Begin at the armpit and make a series of three small circles. Use light, medium and deep pressure. Think about the BSE grid pattern and begin again. Cover your entire breast area. Repeat for left side.

Visit www.healthywomen.org for more information