**CYSTS**

Cysts are fluid-filled masses in the breast, unlike cancerous masses, which are solid. Cysts are very common and are rarely associated with cancer. Ultrasound is the best way to differentiate a cyst from cancer, because sound waves pass right through a liquid-filled cyst but bounce off of a solid lump. In some cases, cyst aspirations are recommended to remove fluid with a hollow needle and a syringe. This is performed under ultrasound guidance, often to confirm whether a lesion is cystic or solid or to relieve discomfort from a painful cyst.

Schedule your appointment with Charlotte Radiology.

Any and all breast health concerns should be discussed with your primary care physician. If your physician orders diagnostic imaging, Charlotte Radiology is here to help.

704.367.2232
877.362.2232 (toll-free)

For more information about Charlotte Radiology, visit us online at CharlotteRadiology.com.

**BREAST HEALTH FOR MEN**

Talk to your doctor if you develop any of these warning signs:

- A hard lump or knot in your chest area
- Swelling in your chest area
- Dimpling or puckering of the skin on your chest
- Redness, scaling or retracting of the nipple
- Discharge from the nipple

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Men get breast cancer

Men are often surprised to learn they are at risk for breast cancer. But the fact is, men do have breast tissue and, therefore, can get breast cancer. Occurrence is rare: In the US, around 2,000 new cases of breast cancer are diagnosed in men each year, and about 400 men will die from breast cancer. The lifetime risk of a male developing breast cancer is roughly 1 in 1,000. In comparison, the lifetime risk for women is about 1 in 8.

However, men and women with the same stage breast cancer have a fairly similar outlook for survival.

Risk factors for developing male breast cancer include:

- Aging (68 is the average age at diagnosis)
- Family history of breast cancer
- BRCA2 gene mutations
- Gynecomastia (pronounced breast-like appearance)
- Klinefelter’s syndrome (high levels of estrogen)
- Obesity

Having one or more of these risks does not mean you will get cancer; conversely, men with no risk factors at all may still get it. The best strategies are early detection and prompt treatment, just as with women. Though there is little benefit to screening men in the general population, mammography and careful breast exams could be advantageous for men with a strong family history of breast cancer and/or the BRCA mutations found by genetic testing. Men with such a history should discuss this with their physician.

Diagnostic Mammography

A diagnostic mammogram is encouraged for patients experiencing breast symptoms like a lump or changes in the skin; however, it does require a physician’s referral. In these cases, Charlotte Radiology has all of the tools available to provide an accurate diagnosis.

What should I expect?

During your appointment, breast compression may cause some brief discomfort, but it shouldn’t be painful. Breast compression helps facilitate better x-rays by flattening the breast so that the maximum amount of tissue can be examined. This allows for a lower x-ray dose, and holding the breast in place prevents blurring on the mammogram. A radiologist will interpret the images, and possibly order an ultrasound or biopsy, to provide you with an accurate diagnosis.

Needle Biopsy

Sometimes a biopsy is necessary to determine whether a breast lump is benign or cancerous. At Charlotte Radiology, we realize a needle biopsy can be emotionally stressful. Our staff is trained to make this safe, minimally invasive procedure as comfortable and quick as possible. These are generally covered by insurance.

Understanding Breast Pain

Most causes of male breast pain are benign and may include breast injury, irritation from friction during exercise, or an infection. If you have breast pain, start by examining the painful area and try to determine what is causing the pain. If you have a bruise or irritation, try hot or cold packs, acetaminophen, ibuprofen or aspirin. If a lump accompanies the breast pain or if the pain does not resolve on its own, contact your physician for evaluation.

Understanding Breast Lumps

Finding a breast lump can be alarming, but it does not necessarily mean you have breast cancer. A breast lump can result from many benign conditions including gynecomastia, lipoma, sebaceous cyst or intraductal papilloma. But it’s best to play it safe. If you feel a breast lump, notice any changes in the breast skin or nipple discharge, contact your physician for immediate evaluation.

GYNECOMASTIA

One of the most common male breast disorders, gynecomastia is an increase in the amount of male breast tissue. Gynecomastia can present itself by enlarging the breast rather than appearing as a distinct tumor. Symptoms include a button-like or disk-like growth under the nipple or areola, which can be felt and sometimes seen. Some medications can cause gynecomastia, including drugs used to treat ulcers, heartburn, high blood pressure, and heart failure. Men diagnosed with gynecomastia should consult with their physician on whether any medications they are taking may have caused the disease. Gynecomastia is much more common in men than breast cancer; however, both have similar symptoms. It’s important to always have breast lumps checked by your physician.

LIPOMAS

Lipomas are slow growing tumors made up of fat tissue and are typically located just below the skin. These moveable, doughy lumps are usually harmless. Lipomas can occur at any age but are most common in adults aged 40-60. They tend to run in families, so genetics are a risk factor. In most cases, lipomas do not need to be treated; however, if the lipoma is bothersome or painful, patients may elect to have it removed.

Take a closer look at charlotteradiology.com