



# Women's Mid-Life Health Centre of Saskatchewan

Saskatoon City Hospital  
701 Queen Street  
Saskatoon, SK S7K 0M7  
P 306-655-7681 F 306-655-8915  
info@menopausecentre.org  
www.menopausecentre.org

## Health Issues



### Breast Health

Breast tenderness is common during perimenopause, due to the fluctuations of estrogen and progesterone. Some women will have increased breast tenderness when they start hormone therapy, but this usually resolves in a week or two. If it doesn't resolve, you may need an adjustment in your dose of HT.

For relief of pain, make sure your bra is the correct fit and support; cut back on caffeine and salt; some people find evening primrose oil is helpful but research shows mixed reviews on this. Taking NSAIDs, Non Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (ibuprofen) may be helpful for the short term.

Women worry about getting breast cancer. The Canadian Cancer Society encourages women to take charge of their breast health.

- **Know the risk factors for breast cancer** – check the Canadian Cancer Society's website to learn about the risk factors. [www.cancer.ca](http://www.cancer.ca)
- **Reduce your risk** – 34% of postmenopausal breast cancers may be avoided by lifestyle changes in later life!
  - Be smoke free
  - Eat 5 to 10 servings of vegetables and fruit a day; choose high-fibre, lower-fat foods
  - Limit alcohol consumption to less than 1 or 2 alcoholic drinks per day
  - Be physically active 30 – 40 minutes each day
  - Maintain a healthy body weight
- **Watch for signs and symptoms**
  - Painless lump or swelling in breast or armpit
  - Change in breast size or shape
  - Dimpling or puckering of the skin – thickening or dimpling may look like orange peel
  - Redness, swelling, increased warmth in the affected breast
  - Inverted nipple – nipple turns inward
  - Crusting or scaling on the nipple
  - Other health problems can cause these symptoms, too. Testing is needed to make a diagnosis
- **Follow breast screening recommendations**
  - Get to know your breast by doing breast self-exam regularly
  - Have a clinical breast examination by a trained health professional at least every two years if over the age of 40
  - Have a mammogram every two years if you are between the ages of 50 and 69. If age 40 to 49, discuss your risk of breast cancer and risks of mammography with your doctor. If you are 70 and older, talk to your doctor about your screening needs.
  - If you notice any changes, see your doctor right away. Many women discover their own breast cancer through changes in the look and feel of their breasts.
- **Find out more at [www.cancer.ca](http://www.cancer.ca) or call 1-888-939-3333**

Support

Inform

Inspire