

Common reasons of breast lumps

Breast lumps are very common in females, and they cause considerable anxiety. Most of the breast lumps are benign or non-cancerous and there is no need to worry about them.

The three most common reasons for breast lumps are

1. Fibrocystic breast disease
2. Fibro adenoma
3. Breast cancer

Fibrocystic breast disease is very common, and it affects the females between 20 and 50 years of age. It is hormone related. The pain and lumps in the breast get worse before periods and settle after periods. The lumps change in size and one or both breasts feel nodular.

Fibro adenoma is another very common type of breast lump. It is common in females in 20s. The lump is firm, smooth and painless. It does not usually cause any symptoms. It may change its position in the breast and that's why it is called breast mouse. If it is causing any issues, can be treated with surgery when the lump is excised from the breast and breast tissue is preserved.

Breast cancer presents as a painless, hard lump that is fixed to the breast tissue or nonmobile as it grows over time. It can be associated with some skin changes and sometime a lump in the armpit, a lymph node. If breast cancer spreads to other part of the body, there may be specific symptoms related to organ involved.

A persistent lump in the breast of a female should be investigated. The usual investigations that are required are ultrasound, mammogram (special X-ray of the breasts), and biopsy of the lump.

Breast Cancer Screening:

It is recommended that every female should have a mammogram from 40 years of age on yearly basis. If there is a family member with diagnosed breast cancer, then this screening test should be started at an earlier age.

Every female should do monthly breast assessment herself; usual timing should be just after when periods (menstruation) are over. If there is any lump, or change in shape of breast, or skin changes, she should contact her physician at earliest as it may represent early breast cancer.

Early breast cancer is treatable and curable. Let's defeat breast cancer together.