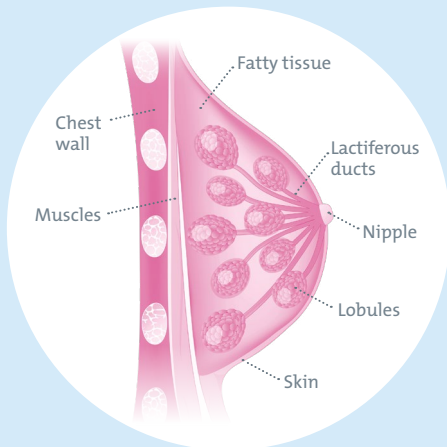




What is breast cancer?

Breast cancer occurs when cancerous cells grow in breast ducts or lobules, or spread into breast tissue.



Signs and symptoms

It's natural and common for changes to occur to your breasts. Approximately 90% of changes are not due to cancer. For peace of mind, we encourage you to consult a GP. If you have noticed an abnormal change in your breast, please book a breast check appointment.

Signs of breast cancer can include:

- > a lump, or lumpiness, in the breast area
- > changes to the nipple
- > nipple discharge (blood or clear)
- > unusual and persistent redness of the skin (including new rashes or other colour changes)
- > pain or tenderness in the armpit
- > pain or tenderness in the breast.

Common tests used to diagnose breast cancer

If your Epworth doctor cannot rule out a tumour following preliminary tests such as a mammogram or physical exam, one or more of the following diagnostic tests will be performed.

Medical imaging

An ultrasound or mammogram may be scheduled to provide detailed images of your breast tissue.

Surgical biopsy

If your scans show any abnormalities, a surgical biopsy will be organised to formally diagnose the presenting condition. A small amount of breast tissue will be removed during the biopsy to be inspected under a microscope.

Treatment options

Everyone's breast cancer treatment journey is unique. Speak to your Epworth specialist team to understand the best approach to treatment for you.

Breast cancer surgery

There are two common types of breast cancer surgery:

Breast conserving surgery

Breast cancer conserving surgery includes surgeries such as a partial mastectomy, wide local incision, or lumpectomy.

Mastectomy

A mastectomy includes the removal of a whole breast or both breasts (double mastectomy).

If your treatment includes a mastectomy, you may choose to undergo breast reconstruction surgery. We encourage you to speak with your surgeon who can refer you to a plastic surgeon.

Chemotherapy

Chemotherapy is a common form of treatment that involves the use of anti-cancer drugs to attack cancer cells. It is often used alongside other treatments such as radiotherapy or surgery.

One common side effect of chemotherapy is hair loss. Scalp cooling may help to reduce hair loss and is offered in our day oncology units.

Radiotherapy

Radiotherapy is the use of radiation to treat and manage cancer.

Endocrine therapy

Endocrine therapy, also known as hormone therapy, uses drugs to limit the level of female hormones in the body. Your doctor may recommend endocrine therapy depending on your age (if you have reached menopause) and type of breast cancer.

Targeted therapy

Targeted therapy works for HER2 positive breast cancer patients and involves drugs that target cancer cells.

Your care team

Throughout your breast cancer journey, your care team is likely to include a specialist such as a breast surgeon, medical oncologist and/or radiation oncologist. You will also be supported by nurses, including specialist breast care nurses, and allied health staff.

Your care team is here to provide you with comprehensive treatment, access to talented, caring specialists and support for you, and your family, during this challenging time.

They can also connect you with support groups or resources such as through the **Breast Cancer Network Australia** bcna.org.au

Why choose Epworth for cancer care?

No one wants to experience cancer. *Our goal is to support you.*

You can expect a trusted specialist who will listen to your concerns and discuss the latest treatment options available for you to choose from. You will receive care in comfortable, nurturing spaces where your loved ones can be a part of your journey.

Your own team of experts — doctors, nurses and allied health professionals — will focus on your wellbeing. **Ask your GP for a referral to Epworth.**

The breast cancer pathway at Epworth

Information to help you feel prepared for your next steps.

> Screening

If you are aged 40 or older you can access a free mammogram every two years.

> Symptoms

Noticed a change in the look or feel of your breast? Speak to your GP or self-refer to the **Epworth Breast Clinic** for same-day answers.

> Diagnosis

Comprehensive breast cancer investigation is available at Epworth with medical imaging and surgical biopsy.

> Treatment

Epworth specialists are here to help you understand your treatment options so you can make an informed choice of treatment.

> Rehabilitation

The Enhance breast cancer rehabilitation program aims to support you through physical, functional and emotional needs.

> After treatment

Life after cancer treatment can pose its own challenges but our Epworth specialists are here to support your recovery and wellbeing after treatment.

Choose your Epworth breast cancer specialist



Click
or scan the
QR code



- > Breast surgeons
- > Medical oncologists
- > Radiation oncology service
- > Plastic and reconstructive surgery service

Epworth locations for cancer care

We are Victoria's largest not-for-profit private hospital group, renowned for excellence in diagnosis, treatment, care and rehabilitation. You will find specialist wards, imaging, pathology, and more, all onsite.

Get access to:

- > Your choice of specialist and location.
- > Timely screening, investigation and diagnosis.
- > Treatment (including surgery, chemotherapy, radiation therapy, targeted treatment and clinical trials).
- > Modern inpatient and day oncology facilities.
- > Multidisciplinary care with experts across specialties.

Epworth Eastern

1 Arnold Street
Box Hill VIC 3128
Phone 03 8807 7100

Epworth Freemasons

109 Albert Street
East Melbourne VIC 3002
Phone 03 9483 3833

Epworth Geelong

1 Epworth Place
Waurm Ponds VIC 3216
Phone 03 5271 7777

Epworth Richmond

89 Bridge Road
Richmond VIC 3121
Phone 03 9426 666

To become an Epworth patient, ask your GP for a referral to an Epworth specialist.



For more information about breast cancer visit epworth.org.au/oncology

