



What causes fibrocystic breast changes?

FBC may be due to the hormonal changes that happen during your menstrual cycle. In addition, FBC may be associated with a variety of dietary/lifestyle factors, including caffeine consumption, excessive dietary saturated fat, low dietary fiber, and stress.

How are fibrocystic breast changes diagnosed?

To diagnose FBC, your doctor will do a breast exam. If more information is needed, your doctor may request that a mammogram, ultrasound, or needle biopsy be performed.

It is important that all women do a monthly breast self-exam. Knowing what is normal for your breasts will help you detect any changes that may signal FBC or something more serious. Discuss any changes with your doctor.



Understanding fibrocystic breast changes (FBC)

You're not alone with breast discomfort



Learning about fibrocystic breast changes

- Consists of lumpy and/or tender breasts
- Affects millions of women in the United States
- Does not increase your chances of getting breast cancer
- Your doctor may recommend lifestyle changes (cutting back on salt, fat, and caffeine) or other treatments

Talk to your doctor if you experience lumpy, swollen, or tender breasts, especially around the time of your period.



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Understanding fibrocystic breast changes

What are fibrocystic breast changes?

Fibrocystic breast changes (FBC) include breasts that feel tender, swollen, lumpy, or thick, especially right before your period. The condition is very common and usually includes discomfort in one or both of the breasts. FBC is also called *fibrocystic breast disease*, *benign breast disease*, or *lumpy or dense breasts*.

FBC is a benign (non-cancerous) condition and should be diagnosed by your doctor. It is important to remember that FBC does not increase your chance of getting breast cancer. If you are diagnosed with FBC, you are not alone. FBC is common and affects millions of women in the United States.

FBC is most common in women during the childbearing years. Many women first notice FBC in their 30s, when hormone levels start to vary more than before.

What are the symptoms of fibrocystic breast changes?

FBC symptoms can include:

- Breast discomfort, usually in both breasts
- Swollen, tender, or painful breasts
- Lumpy breasts (breast nodularity)
- Breasts that feel full or heavy
- Occasional nipple discharge



How are fibrocystic breast changes treated?

If you are diagnosed with fibrocystic breast changes (FBC), there are ways to care for your symptoms.

Your doctor may recommend:

Lifestyle changes

- Avoid caffeine (coffee, tea, soda, and chocolate)
- Decrease the amount of salt and fat in your diet
- Wear a well-fitting bra to provide good breast support

Other alternatives

- Doctor-recommended vitamin supplements
- Birth control pills
- Over-the-counter pain relief



Talk to your doctor about which treatment options are right for you.



Talking to your doctor

Sometimes it's hard to talk to your doctor about symptoms you may feel. Here is a list of questions to help you make the most of your doctor visit. Please think about the answers to these questions to help you begin a discussion with your doctor about your breast discomfort:

- Do any breast changes or discomfort occur during your menstrual period?
- What is the date of your last menstrual period?
- Have you had any previous breast problems?
- Have you found any lumps in your breasts?
- Do you have any nipple discharge?
- When was your last mammogram?