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If you need more advice about cancer and support
groups, please contact:

www.maggiescentres.org

Maggies Highlands Tel: 01463 706302

Maggies Dundee Tel: 01382 496384

Maggies Edinburgh Tel: 0131 5373131

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Seen in clinic by.....

**This leaflet was written by Guy's & St. Thomas'
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Group Scotland.**

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Breast Cancer in the Family - What does this mean for you?



Information for women
with a low or moderate
lifetime risk of breast
cancer

Breast cancer in the family – What does this mean for you?

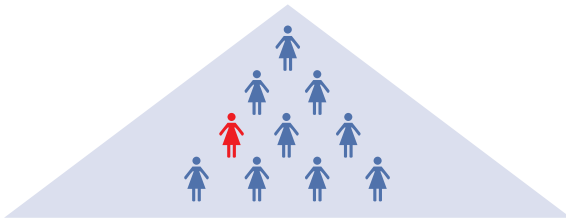
We hear a lot about "inherited breast cancer". This can be confusing and alarming.

As breast cancer is fairly common, many women have at least one relative with this type of cancer. Yet most of those women do not have an "inherited" type of breast cancer.

How common is breast cancer?

In the UK, breast cancer is one of the most common types of cancer affecting women. Most women in this country have about 1 chance in 10 of developing breast cancer during their lifetime. However, most women who get breast cancer are aged over 60.

Breast Cancer



What is inherited breast cancer?

A very small number of women who develop breast cancer have an inherited tendency to get this type of cancer.

What type of family history suggests an inherited tendency to get breast cancer?

It is **very rare** to have an inherited tendency to develop breast cancer.

This inherited tendency generally only occurs in families where:

Either at least three close relatives (usually on the same side of the family) develop breast cancer before the menopause,
or several close relatives (usually on the same side of the family) have had breast cancer at a young age,
or some relatives have had breast cancer and others have had ovarian cancer.

If you have been told that your lifetime risk of breast cancer is low or moderately increased, it is **unlikely** that the breast cancer in your family is due to an inherited tendency.

What is a "low" risk of breast cancer?

If you are at low risk, your chances of getting breast cancer during your lifetime are no different, or not much different, from the chances of any other woman in the population.

Do women with low risk of breast cancer need screening?

Women at low risk do not need to have breast screening before the age of 50.

Between the ages of 50 and 70, three yearly mammograms are offered on the National Breast Screening Programme.

What is a "moderate" risk of breast cancer?

If you are at moderate risk, this means that you have an increased chance of getting breast cancer during your lifetime.

A moderately increased risk of breast cancer means that you are much more likely **not** to get breast cancer than you are to get it.

Do women with a moderate risk of breast cancer need screening?

If you have a moderate risk of breast cancer you may be offered breast screening before the age of 50. This will have been discussed with you.

What should you do if someone else in your family gets breast or ovarian cancer?

This may not alter your risk of developing this type of cancer. However, please let us know and we will look at your family history again.

What can you do to keep a check on yourself?

By being aware of how your breasts normally look and feel you are more likely to notice if there are any changes in your breasts. If you are concerned you can go to your GP who will refer you to a specialist if necessary.