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You are entitled to a copy of any letter we write about you. Please ask if you want one when you come to the hospital.

If you are unhappy with the advice you have been given by your GP, consultant, or another healthcare professional, you may ask for a second (or further) opinion.

The evidence used in the preparation of this leaflet is available on request. Please email: [patient.information@salisbury.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@salisbury.nhs.uk) if you would like a reference list.

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# Breast family history patient initiated follow-up (PIFU) (page 1 of 3)

## Introducing self-supported management

Previously it has been the norm for patients who have been seen in the breast family history clinic to be followed up at regular intervals by the breast team. Some patients find these pre-arranged visits useful and reassuring. Other patients find these hospital visits a source of great anxiety and not particularly helpful; unless they have a particular concern.

There is now very good evidence to show that this system does not really help. Like many other breast units in other parts of the UK, Salisbury breast unit now uses a system which allows you to arrange follow-up appointments **as and when you need them**, if there is a concern, until you are contacted by the National Breast Screening Programme and discharged from Family History clinic.

This information aims to explain what self-supported management is and how it works, with all the information you need to contact the breast unit and arrange follow-up appointments for yourself. It also contains information we hope you will find useful to support you to feel confident looking after your own follow-up.

## What is self-supported management?

Self-supported management puts you in control of your hospital follow-up.

Once you have received this information, you will no longer be given routine follow-up clinic appointments at regular intervals. Instead, you will be able to contact the Unit **directly** to arrange a follow-up appointment with the breast team as and when you feel concerned.

## When should I be seen by the Breast Team?

You should arrange a review by a member of the breast team if you have concerns about the following issue:

- new changes in your breasts, or under your arms.

## Who do I call to arrange a review?

 01722 336262 ext 5910 or 5913

Please leave a brief message and a contact telephone number on our answer phone. You will be contacted by one of our breast specialist nurses within 2 working days. They will briefly discuss the nature of your concern with you and if necessary arrange a clinic appointment. We will aim to see

**Breast Care Department**  
**01722 336262 ext 5910 or 5913**

you within 2 weeks of your telephone call. Your GP can also use this number to contact us if he or she feels you need to be seen by the breast team.

## Remaining breast aware

**Q.** Should I still examine my breasts and what should I do if I find a lump or notice a new change in my breast?

**A.** Yes, do so regularly (ideally monthly the week after your menstrual period) so that you are familiar with the way that they look and feel (we call this “breast aware”). If you find a new lump or abnormality within your breast then contact the Breast Care Department on 01722 336262 ext 5910 or 5913.

**Q.** Will I have regular mammograms?

**A.** According to your risk, women who have been referred to the breast family history clinic have regular annual follow-up mammograms until screening age which is 50-70 (soon to be 47-73). You will then be discharged from the Family History clinic and have mammograms every 3 years via the Breast Screening Program.

**Q.** How will I get my results?

**A.** We will write to you and your GP with your mammogram results within 2-3 weeks.

## Breast awareness

- look at and feel your breasts so you know what’s normal for you
- do this regularly to check for changes
- tell your breast specialist nurse if you notice anything unusual.

If you experience a new lump in or near the breast, armpit or neck lasting for more than 1 to 2 weeks, please contact us to arrange a medical review:

Do remember, however, this can also be caused by other conditions completely unrelated to breast cancer, so please do not become unduly anxious whilst waiting for your review.

## Discharge from self-supported management into the National Breast Screening Programme

When you have been contacted by the National Breast Screening Programme (aged 47-50 years), please phone the Breast Care Department on 01722 336262 ext 5910 or 5913 so we can discharge you from the Family History Clinic.

## Further reading

### **Breast Cancer Care – Taking care of your breasts**

[www.breastcancercare.org.uk](http://www.breastcancercare.org.uk)

☎ 0808 800 6000

**Hereditary Breast Cancer Helpline** – Support and information for anyone concerned about hereditary breast cancer

[www.breastcancergenetics.co.uk](http://www.breastcancergenetics.co.uk)

☎ 01629 813000

### **Breast Cancer Now – TLC Touch Look Check**

[www.breastcancernow.org/tlc](http://www.breastcancernow.org/tlc)

☎ 0333 20 70 300