



Joan Brown,
cancer survivor

**1 in 3 women
who get breast
cancer are over 70,
so don't assume
you're past it.**

**BE CLEAR
ON CANCER**



Dr Rosie Loftus

...about **breast cancer**

Breast cancer is the most common cancer in England with around 41,500 women diagnosed each year. The older you are, the more likely you are to get it – one in three women who gets breast cancer is aged 70 and over.

If breast cancer is detected early, it is more treatable. Finding it early could save your life.

...about how to spot it

It is important to get to know how your breasts look and feel normally, so that you'll find it easier to spot something unusual.

Get into the habit of checking your breasts regularly. Feel the whole of both breasts and your armpits. Does anything seem different? Look at your breasts in the mirror. Do they appear to have changed at all? If so, it is worth getting checked out.

Possible signs of breast cancer include:

- A lump in your breast or armpit
- Nipple changes
- Changes to the skin of your breast
- Changes in the shape or size of your breast
- Pain in your breast or armpit

If you have any of the above symptoms, go and see your doctor immediately.

...about how important it is to see your doctor

If you notice any changes in your breasts, it is important that you contact your doctor straight away. You're not wasting anyone's time and it's much better to be sure, if only to put your mind at rest.

Finding breast cancer early makes it more treatable. A trip to your doctor's surgery could save your life. And if a friend or relative says they have any of these symptoms, insist they see their doctor.

...about breast cancer screening

Women between the ages of 50 and 70 are currently invited for screening, which can detect the condition at an early stage. The screening programme is gradually extending to include everyone aged 47 – 73, but this hasn't happened everywhere yet.

If you're over 70, you can ask for a free screening every three years. Just get in touch with your local breast-screening unit to make an appointment (find your local unit on NHS Choices at <http://www.nhs.uk/service-search/breast-screening-services/locationsearch/325>).

To help you decide whether or not you want to have breast screening, you can read about the process and its benefits and risks at <http://www.cancerscreening.nhs.uk/breastscreen/publications/ia-02.html>

Whatever your age, and even if you attend screening, it's important to keep on checking for changes to your breasts. If you find anything unusual, notice a possible symptom or are concerned because you have a family history of breast cancer, don't wait for your screening appointment. See your doctor right away to be on the safe side.

You can find your doctor's contact details online at nhs.uk/breastcancer70

...about how seeing your doctor early could save your life



For many years I examined my breasts fairly regularly. Then in 2005 I noticed a change in my breast – a small lump – so I made an appointment to see my doctor. He sent me for tests and I was diagnosed with breast cancer. I used to work in a hospital, which I think helped me deal with finding out I had cancer, and my brother and my friends have been very supportive. My treatment included radiotherapy, surgery and hormone therapy, and my appointments with the Breast Care Unit will carry on for a while. I still do the things I used to do and more. I'm very involved in my local community and I'm also an active supporter of Breakthrough Breast Cancer. I'm glad I didn't leave it any longer before going to my doctor. Many women over the age of 70 don't realise that they're at risk of breast cancer, so it's very important if you notice any changes in your breasts to see your doctor straight away.

Joan Brown, aged 81

...about how to **reduce** your chances of getting breast cancer

Maintain a healthy weight

Keeping a healthy body weight is a great way to help reduce your risk of cancer. Try to eat at least five portions of fruit and vegetables a day, whether fresh, frozen or tinned.

Cut down on alcohol

Drinking too much alcohol can lead to a number of health problems and is linked with breast cancer. By drinking less, you'll reduce your health risks.

Look after yourself

Keep active. Swimming or cycling are good ways to stay fit if you can manage these activities. Or go dancing or try yoga – the more you can do, the better. Even walking to your local shops instead of taking the car can make a difference.

Unclear on anything?

Visit **nhs.uk/breastcancer70**

If you want to talk in confidence about cancer, call Cancer Research UK's information nurses on freephone **0808 800 4040**

