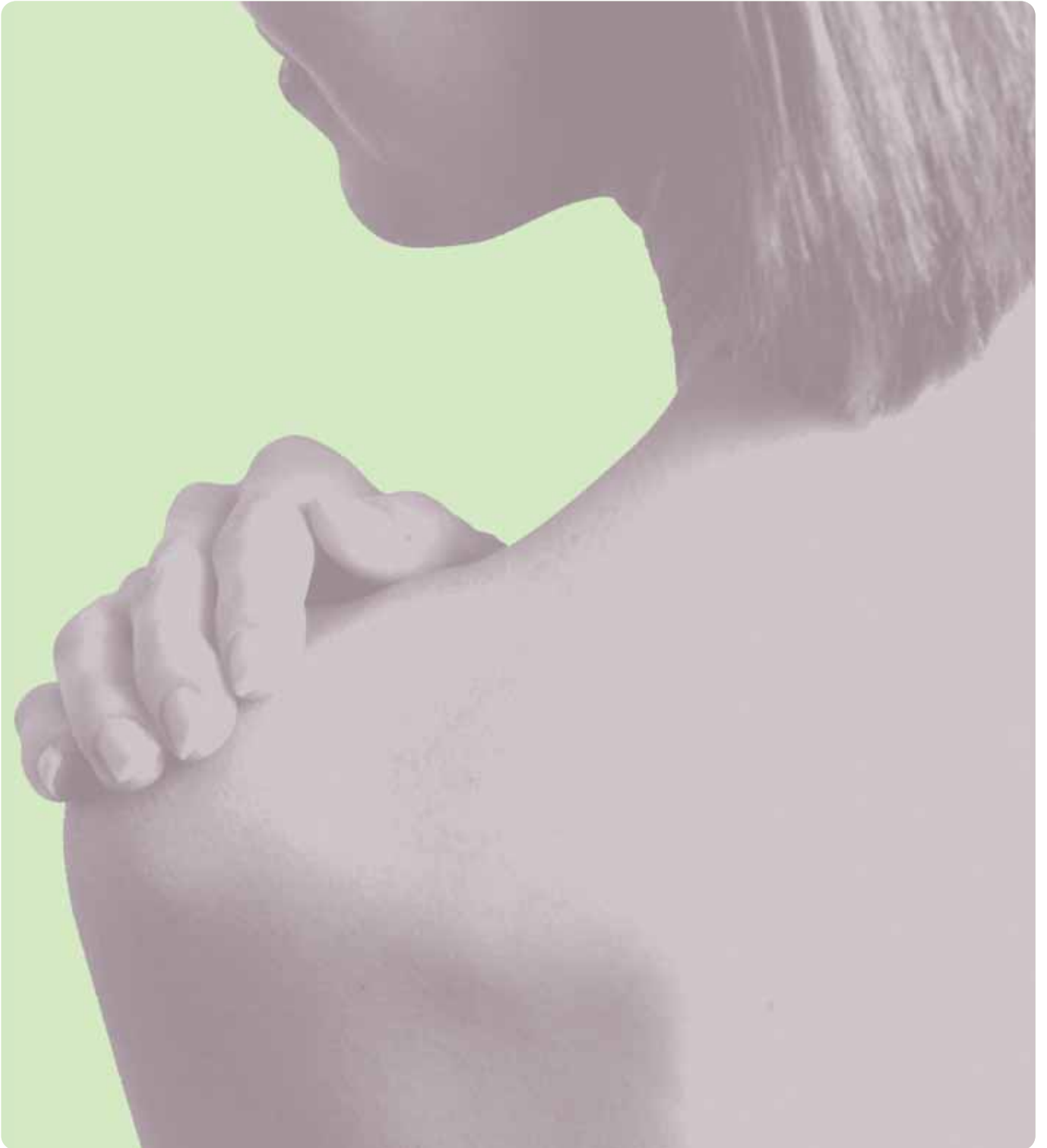


Hyperplasia and atypical hyperplasia



Breast problems series

Hyperplasia and atypical hyperplasia

About this leaflet

This leaflet tells you about hyperplasia and atypical hyperplasia. It explains what these conditions are, how they're found and what will happen if they need to be treated or followed up.

If you've been told you have hyperplasia or atypical hyperplasia you may feel worried or anxious. We hope this information helps you understand more about hyperplasia or atypical hyperplasia and what this means for you.

What is hyperplasia?

The breasts are made up of lobules (milk-producing glands) and ducts (tubes that carry milk to the nipple), which are surrounded by fatty tissue and supportive tissue. Sometimes normal cells within the breast grow bigger and increase in number. This is called hyperplasia. It can occur in the ducts (ductal hyperplasia) or the lobules (lobular hyperplasia).

Hyperplasia is benign (non-cancerous), and usually develops naturally as the breast ages and changes. It can affect women of any age. Hyperplasia doesn't produce any symptoms or cause pain and is usually found by chance.

Hyperplasia and atypical hyperplasia

What is atypical hyperplasia?

Atypical hyperplasia is where the cells within the breast develop an unusual pattern and shape. Again it can occur in the ducts (atypical ductal hyperplasia) and the lobules (atypical lobular hyperplasia).

Atypical hyperplasia is also benign (non-cancerous), doesn't produce any symptoms or cause any pain. However, as it's possible that the abnormal cells in the ducts or lobules may spread to the surrounding tissue, having atypical hyperplasia has been shown to slightly increase the risk of developing breast cancer in the future.

When these cell changes in the lobules are very unusual, the condition is known as lobular carcinoma in situ (LCIS). This is not a true cancer (carcinoma) but an in-between stage where the abnormal cells fill up the lobules. For more information see our **Lobular carcinoma in situ (LCIS)** factsheet.

How are they diagnosed?

Both hyperplasia and atypical hyperplasia are usually found by chance at the breast clinic when the tissue from a biopsy or breast surgery is examined under the microscope in the laboratory.

Hyperplasia and atypical hyperplasia

Treatment and follow up

Hyperplasia

In most cases you won't need any treatment or follow up if you have hyperplasia.

Atypical hyperplasia

If you have atypical hyperplasia, your specialist is likely to want you to have follow-up appointments. This may include regular clinic visits and a mammogram every one to two years. Your specialists may sometimes advise you to have a small operation to remove the area.

What this means for you

Hyperplasia

You may feel anxious about having hyperplasia, even if it doesn't need any follow up. Even though you may feel relieved that it's a benign condition, you may still worry about breast cancer.

Having hyperplasia does not increase your risk of developing breast cancer. However, it's still important to be breast aware and go back to your GP if you notice any changes in your breasts.

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You can find out more about being breast aware in our **Breast awareness** booklet.

Atypical hyperplasia

If you have atypical hyperplasia, you may be worried or anxious that your risk of breast cancer is slightly increased. Please remember that this doesn't mean you'll necessarily develop breast cancer in the future. However, it is important to go to your regular follow-up appointments and continue to be breast aware.

Again, you can find out more about being breast aware in our **Breast awareness** booklet.

If you'd like any further information or support, call our free helpline on **0808 800 6000** (for Typetalk prefix **18001**). You may also find it helpful to chat to someone who's had a similar experience to you by visiting our online benign breast conditions forum at www.breastcancercare.org.uk.

This leaflet has been produced by Breast Cancer Care's clinical specialists and reviewed by healthcare professionals and people affected by benign breast conditions.

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Breast Cancer Care is the UK's leading provider of information, practical assistance and emotional support for anyone who has concerns about breast health or has been affected by breast cancer. Every year we respond to over two million requests through our publications, website and helpline. All our services are free.

Breast Cancer Care promotes the breast awareness 5-point code:

- 1 Know what is normal for you
- 2 Know what changes to look for
- 3 Look and feel
- 4 Report any changes to your GP without delay
- 5 Attend routine breast screening if you are aged 50 or over.

For more information see our publications on breast health, visit www.breastcancercare.org.uk or call the Breast Cancer Care helpline free on **0808 800 6000** (for Typetalk prefix **18001**). Calls may be monitored for training purposes. Confidentiality is maintained between callers and Breast Cancer Care.

This leaflet is also available in Braille on request. Call 0845 092 0808 for more information.