How to reduce your chances of getting breast cancer

Look after yourself
Try to get your 5-a-day. So eat more vegetables and fruit, fish, and wholegrain foods. Eat less fatty foods like cakes and pastries and fewer processed meats like bacon and ham. It’s also a good idea to reduce your alcohol intake.

Stay fit
Exercise often (walking to the local shops instead of taking the car for example) and try to maintain a healthy weight.

Stop smoking
There’s plenty of support and help available from the NHS. Visit www.smokefree.nhs.uk or call 0800 169 0169.

Screening
The earlier breast cancer is diagnosed, the more treatable it is. Women are invited for screening between the ages of 50 and 70. You will be offered mammograms every three years. A mammogram is an X-ray of the breast. It can detect breast cancer at a very early stage.

If you are invited to have a screening test, please go. It could save your life.

Are you concerned?
In the early stages, breast cancer may not have symptoms. If you are below the screening age or over 70 and worried about breast changes, or have a family history of breast cancer, go and see your doctor. To find your doctor’s contact details, visit www.nhs.uk.

With breast cancer, you won’t always find a lump. I didn’t.

Unclear on anything?
Visit nhs.uk/breastcancer

BE CLEAR ON CANCER
Breast cancer is the most common cancer in the UK with more than 45,500 women diagnosed each year; that means that 1 in 9 women in the UK are affected during their lifetime. Most women who get breast cancer are past their menopause and the chances of having it increase with age, but around 1 in 5 women diagnosed are under 50 years old. If breast cancer is found early, it is highly treatable.

Get to know your breasts.
We’re all different. So get into the habit of regularly checking your breasts, then you’ll find it easier to spot something unusual.
Potential signs of breast cancer include:
- A lump or thickening in the breast or armpit
- Nipple changes – change in size, shape or position, becoming pulled in, rash, scaling, fluid coming from your nipple
- Skin changes – puckering, redness, dimpling or hardening
- Changes in shape or size of your breast
- Pain – in your breast or armpit
- Any change which is unusual for you!
If you have the above symptoms, go and see your doctor immediately.

If you notice any change in your breasts tell your doctor without delay.
If it is breast cancer, finding it early increases your chances of successful treatment.
If you’ve spotted something that’s at all worrying, you must get it checked out. You’re not wasting anyone’s time. It is much better to be sure, if only to put your mind at rest. Ignoring the symptoms and putting off a trip to the doctor’s could mean you’re gambling with your own life.

To find your doctor’s contact details, visit www.nhs.uk