Performing a Self-Breast Exam

Lying down:
- Put a pillow under your right shoulder.
- Place your right arm behind your head.
- Using the pads of your middle three fingers on your left hand, feel around the tissue for lumps. Employ overlapping, dime-sized circular motions.
- Check the entire breast. Apply an up-and-down pattern when moving around the breast. Finish by moving across the chest to the chest bone.
- Squeeze the nipple to check for discharge or lumps.
- Repeat the above steps for the other breast.

Standing in front of the mirror:
- Start with your hands down at your sides.
- Look at both of your breasts to note any changes in size or shape. Also check the color and texture of your skin.
- Repeat these steps with your arms in the air.
- Repeat the steps while pushing down on your hips so that your chest muscles tighten.
- Examine your breasts while bending at your waist, with your hands on your hips to check for any dimpling of the skin.

Report the following changes to your doctor:
- A lump or thickening in or near the breast.
- A change in the size and shape of the breast or that the nipple has been turned inward.
- Red or scaly skin around the breast, areola or nipple.
- Tenderness or discharge in/around the nipple.
For more patient resources and support, or to learn more about our work and get involved visit: breastcanceralliance.org

The mission of Breast Cancer Alliance is to improve survival rates and quality of life for those impacted by breast cancer through better prevention, early detection, treatment and cure. To promote these goals, we invest in innovative research, breast surgery fellowships, regional education, dignified support, and screening for the underserved.