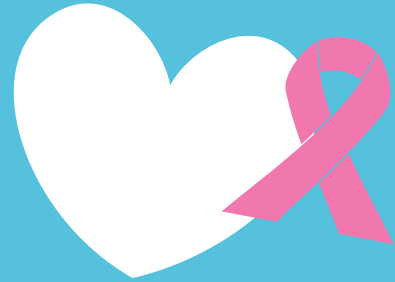


## Breast cancer awareness

October is Breast Cancer Awareness month, which aims to raise awareness of the disease and the importance of early detection.



Breast cancer is the second most common cancer and the leading cause of mortality in women globally, so October is a great time to donate to research into cause, prevention, diagnosis, treatment and cure.

Breast cancer starts in the breast tissue and occurs when abnormal cells grow in an uncontrolled way. Understanding the risk factors and how to detect early signs and symptoms are key in reducing your risk of developing breast cancer.

### **Risk factors include:**

- ▶ Being a woman
- ▶ Increasing age
- ▶ Family history
- ▶ Existing or previous breast condition
- ▶ Hormonal factors
- ▶ Poor lifestyle factors
- ▶ Poor general health

Performing self-examinations and getting regular check-ups with your GP is the best way to detect any warning signs as early as possible. Breast changes that may indicate breast cancer include:

- ▶ A new lump or lumpiness, especially if only in one breast
- ▶ A change in the size or shape of the breast
- ▶ A change to the nipple, such as crusting, ulcer, redness or inversion
- ▶ A nipple discharge that occurs without squeezing
- ▶ A change in the skin of the breast such as redness or dimpling
- ▶ An unusual pain that doesn't go away

### **How to perform self-examination**

The following three steps should be completed regularly.

#### **1. In the shower**

Using the pads of your fingers, move in a circular pattern from the outside to the centre, checking the entire breast and armpit area. Check both breasts each month feeling for any lumps, thickening, or hardened knots.

#### **2. In front of a mirror**

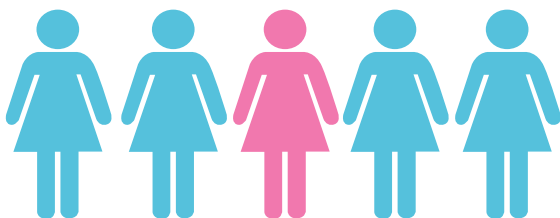
Visually inspect your breasts with your arms at your sides. Next, raise your arms high overhead. Look for any changes in the contour, swelling, or dimpling of the skin, or changes in the nipples. Then, rest your palms on your hips and press firmly to flex your chest muscles. Left and right breasts will not exactly match—few women's breasts do, so look for any dimpling, puckering, or changes, particularly on one side.

#### **3. Lying Down**

When lying down, the breast tissue spreads out evenly along the chest wall. Place a pillow under your right shoulder and your right arm behind your head. Using your left hand, move the pads of your fingers around your right breast gently in small circular motions covering the entire breast area and armpit. Use light, medium, and firm pressure. Squeeze the nipple, check for discharge and lumps. Repeat for your left breast.

If you notice any changes to your breasts or symptoms, you should discuss them your doctor.

[www.nationalbreastcancer.org/breast-self-exam](http://www.nationalbreastcancer.org/breast-self-exam)



# Women's health

## Take control of your health!

Many health conditions are affected by the lifestyle choices we make, which may include smoking, drinking alcohol or not getting regular health checks. Other important lifestyle choices include diet and exercise. Choosing to take control of your health, diet and exercise levels can make a significant difference in your overall health.

### EXERCISE

The Department of Health recommends 3.5–5 hours of moderate intensity physical activity per week. Aim to include muscle strengthening activities on at least two days each week. Anything is better than nothing when it comes to exercise!

The benefits of exercise relating to women's health include decreased risk of cancer, infection and illness, reduced stress hormones and improved metabolism, mood and enhanced sleep quality.

### NUTRITION

The Department of Health recommends a wide variety of nutritious foods from the five main food groups - vegetables and legumes, grain foods, fruit, dairy and lean meats. Aim to consume mostly grain foods, fruit and vegetables. Avoid sugary drinks and highly processed or packaged foods as much as possible.

## Did you know?



Heart disease is the single biggest killer of Australian women. Make sure you get your 30 minutes of physical activity a day to reduce your risk.

Less than 10% of Australians eat the recommended five serves of vegetables each day. Try to get more vegetables in your day by having some at each meal (add spinach to your morning smoothie, snack on carrot and celery sticks, fill your sandwich with lots of salad, and ensure half your dinner plate is made up of vegetables).



## Lentil and vegetable soup with crusty bread

Summer is fast approaching, so enjoy this healthy and warming soup while you still can.

Serves 4

### Ingredients:

- ▶ 1 tbsp olive oil
- ▶ 1 large red onion, finely diced
- ▶ 2 sticks celery, trimmed, diced
- ▶ 2 cloves garlic, peeled, finely diced
- ▶ 1 tsp ground turmeric
- ▶ 1 tsp ground cumin
- ▶ 1 medium sweet potato, peeled, cut into small cubes
- ▶ 4 medium sized tomatoes, roughly chopped
- ▶ 600g canned 'no added salt' brown lentils, drained, rinsed
- ▶ 300ml reduced salt vegetable stock
- ▶ 700ml water
- ▶ 3 cups baby spinach leaves
- ▶ 1 tbsp parsley, roughly chopped, to serve
- ▶ 4 slices crusty multigrain bread, toasted, to serve

### Method:

1. Place a large pot over medium heat and add the olive oil.
2. Add onion, celery and garlic and cook for 1-2 minutes, or until just softened.
3. Add the spices to the pan and cook for another 1-2 minutes until fragrant.
4. Add sweet potato, tomatoes, lentils, vegetable stock and water to the pot and bring to the boil.
5. Reduce heat and simmer, partially covered, for 20-25 minutes or until sweet potato is tender, cooked through and soup has thickened.
6. Stir through spinach.
7. Divide the soup between 4 bowls and serve with chopped parsley, cracked pepper and grained bread.



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