

# Fibrocystic Breast Changes

## What is it?

- **Fibrocystic Breast Changes**– lumpy, tender breasts that normally occur near the time of a woman’s period; not a disease and do not increase your risk for breast cancer; the lobules, lobes and glands are linked by thin tubes called ducts, are benign; can also occur after menopause in women taking HRT/Hormone Replacement Therapy
  - **Breast**- is made up of glands, fibrous tissue, and fat with 15 to 20 sections called lobes; respond to changes in levels of hormones- estrogen and progesterone; change during pregnancy, breastfeeding, menopause and using hormones
    - **Lobes**- has many smaller lobes ending in dozens of tiny glands that produce milk
    - **Nipple Discharge**- clear, white, creamy, green may occur off and on, if bloody red should get checked out immediately



## Signs and Symptoms:

- **Symptoms**- lumps, thickening tissue, swelling (most common during the child bearing years), pain in the breast can occur any time during your cycle; near the time of your period the lumps may become larger and more tender, sharp pain, itching, burning, aching pain; one breast may hurt more than the other



## Facts:

- **Hormones**- cause a change in the amount of fluid in the breast, may make fibrous areas in the breast more painful
- **Sign of a Problem**- new lumps, a lump that grows in size, a distinct lump rather than a lumpy area, a change in breast size

## What can I do?

- **See your Health Care Provider**- for more information; make sure and do a breast self exam monthly making sure to examine the nipple for discharge, upper chest and below the armpits and call your health care provider if you notice any lumps or changes in your breasts; ask about Vitamin E
- **See a Registered Dietitian**- for help as needed; avoid caffeine, limit your salt intake especially the week before your period

