

Women's Health

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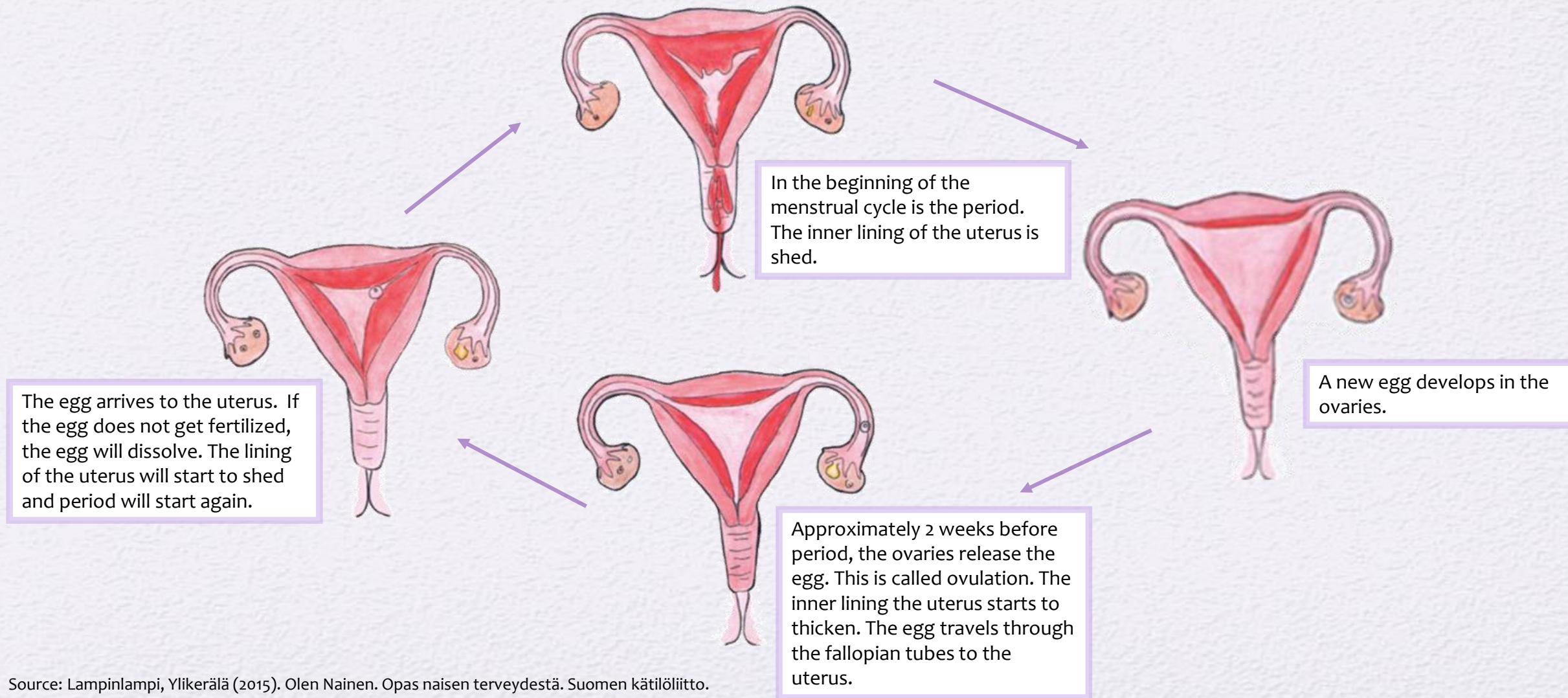
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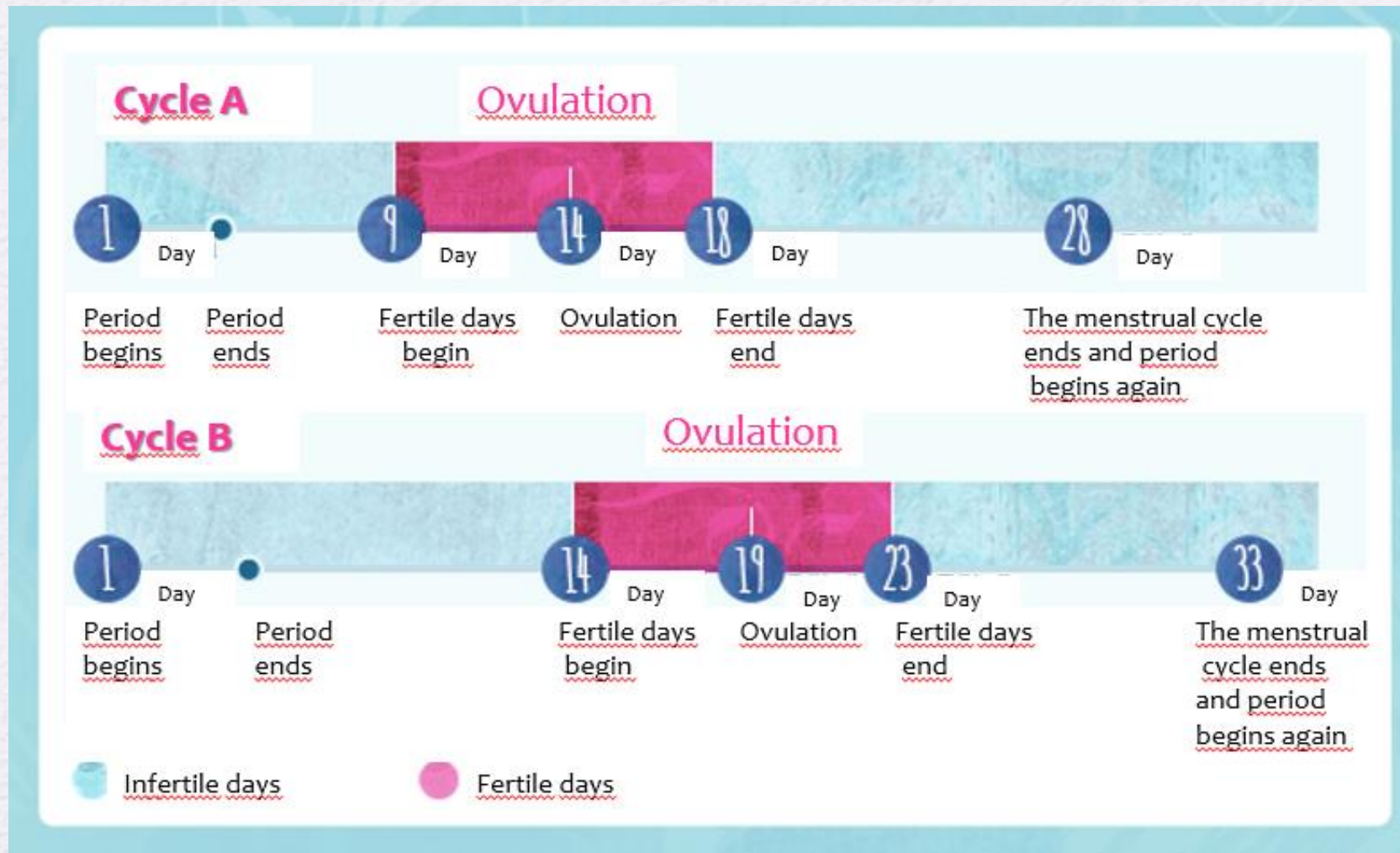
1. Menstrual Period

- The average age for the menstrual period to begin is 12-13-years (usually between 10-16-years)
- Inheritance, sports, diet and sickness during childhood have an affect on the starting age of one's period
- Period usually ends between the age of 40-60-years, on average 51-years
- Every month women's body goes through a menstrual cycle
 - One cycle last usually between 23-35 days
 - The first day of the cycle is the first day of a woman's period

Menstrual Cycle



Examples of Menstrual Cycle

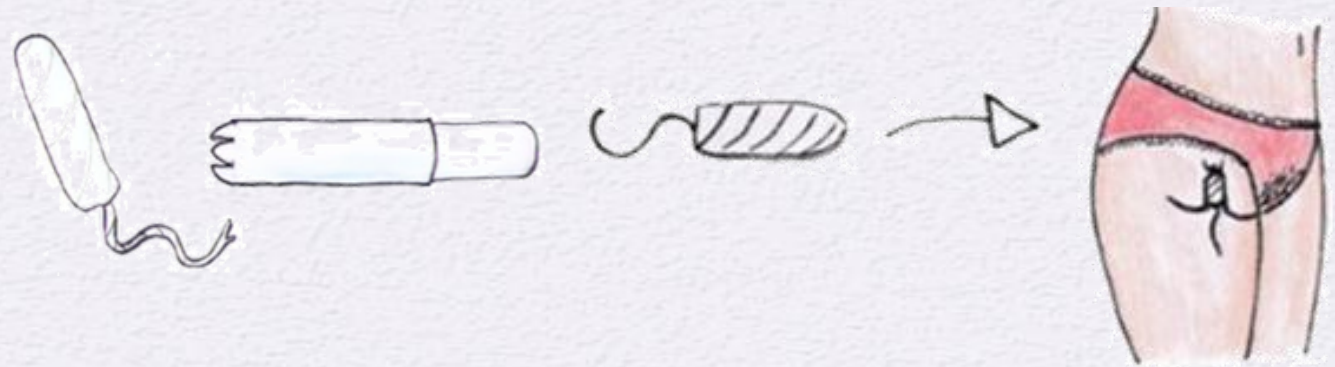


Period Products

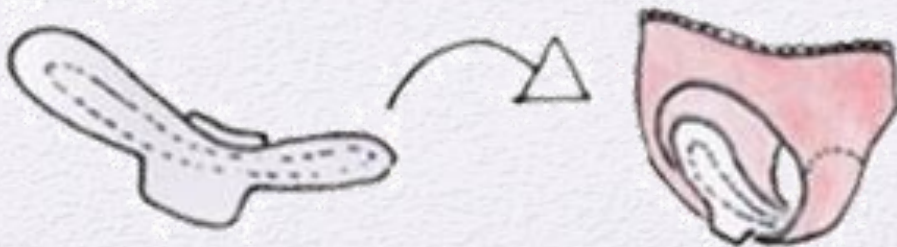
- Pads



- Tampons



- Menstrual cup



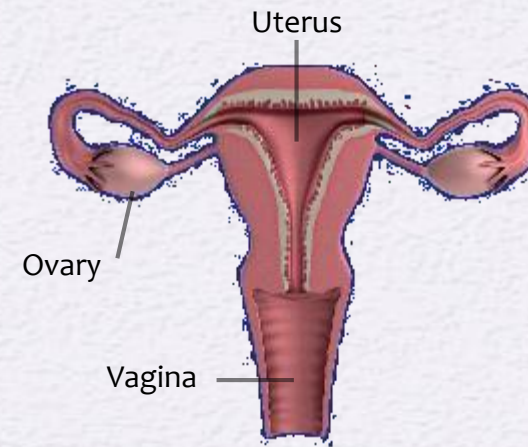
Period Problems

- Heavy period
 - 10–15 % of women in Finland
 - Often causes anemia → make sure you get enough iron from food
 - Schedule a doctor's appointment if it harms your everyday life
- Irregular period
 - Can be caused by dieting, eating disorders and overweight
 - Schedule a doctor's appointment if it harms your everyday life
- Absence of period
 - The reason is usually pregnancy
 - May be caused by dieting, eating disorders and excessive exercising
 - May be due to a general illness (e.g. hypothyroidism)
 - Schedule a doctor's appointment to find out the reason
- PMS= Premenstrual syndrome
 - Means symptoms that come before period
 - Psychological and physical symptoms that affect everyday life
 - Most common symptoms: irritation, depression, crying sensibility
 - Symptoms can be decreased with regular exercising and healthy food



2. Menopause

- Menopause= Last period
 - When period has been absent for 12 months
- The function of the ovaries ceases → ovulation ends, the production of estrogen decreases
- The average age of menopause is 51-years (between 40-60 years)



Symptoms of Menopause

- The production of estrogen in the ovaries decreases, which causes the symptoms of menopause
- Symptoms might start before periods even end
- Some women do not get symptoms



Picture: Stylecraze

Symptoms	Further information
Hot flashes and sweating	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most common symptom of menopause• 70-80% of women get these symptoms• Approximately 20% of women get difficult symptoms• Duration 2-5 years
Sleeping problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Usually is related to sweating during the night
Tiredness, irritation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Usually caused by sleeping problems
Depression, mood swings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Often associated with menopause, but there is no scientific evidence
Thinning of vaginal walls	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vaginal dryness• Itchiness

Treatment of Menopause

- Self-care
 - Healthy and diverse food and exercising → symptoms are less of a harm when your body and mind are doing well
 - Avoid drinking a lot of coffee, eating spicy food and tobacco
 - Kalsium and vitamin D to prevent osteoporosis
- When should you see the doctor?
 - If the symptoms harm your everyday life
 - If you have gynecological problems



Picture: Social Hermit

3. Common Problems

- Urinary incontinence
- Urinary tract infection
- Vaginitis



Picture: PositiveMed

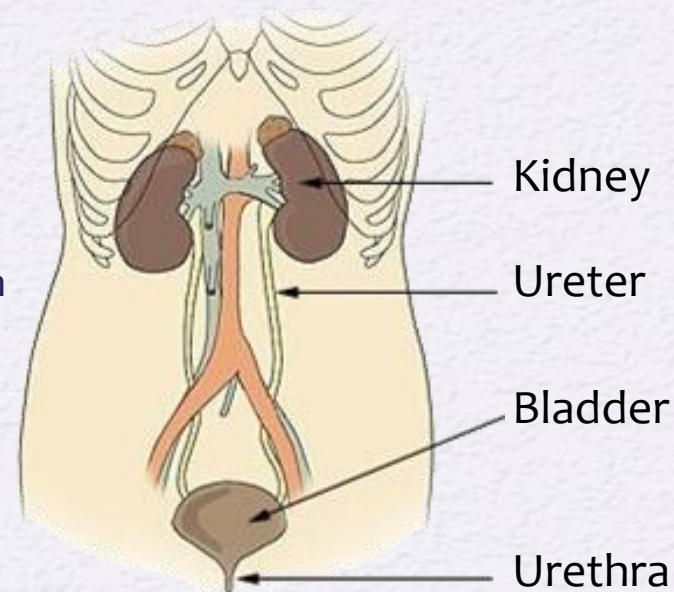
Urinary Incontinence

- A common problem, approximately half of women suffer from it
- Increases with age, especially after menopause
- Occasional urinary incontinence is normal
- Treatment:
 - Strengthening the muscles of the pelvic floor
 - Recommended sports: walking, Pilates, cycling, dancing
 - Hormonal treatment during menopause
 - Pads and diapers protect clothes and mattress protectors for bed



Urinary Tract Infection

- More common among women than men
 - Women's urethra is shorter than men's
- Urethritis, bladder infection, kidney infection
- Usually caused by bacteria from intestines travelling up the urethra to the bladder
- Symptoms:
 - Frequent need to urinate, itching or pain during urination, pain in lower abdomen, fever
 - Symptoms of kidney infection: fever and pain on back or side
- Treatment:
 - Schedule a doctor's appointment
 - Antibiotics prescribed by a doctor
- Prevention:
 - Good hand and intimate hygiene



Picture: *Urinary System*. Johanna Mattila (2014)

Vaginitis

	Yeast infection/ candidiasis	Bacterial Vaginosis
Cause	Usually caused by the overgrowth of a yeast called <i>Candida albicans</i> that is situated in the vagina	When vagina's bacteria strain has been disturbed and the amount of bacteria in the vagina increases
Symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Itching • Fair, sentless vaginal discharge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smelly vaginal discharge
Self-care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good hand and intimate hygiene. Avoid washing vaginal area with soap • Tampon or menstrual cup during period • Cotton or silk underwear • Avoid food that contains a lot of sugar • After going to the toilet, wipe always from the frontside to the backside • Medicine, cream and vaginal tablet from the pharmacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good hand and intimate hygiene. Avoid washing vaginal area with soap • Lactic acid bacteria products from the pharmacy
When should you see a doctor?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you have the symptoms for the first time • If you are pregnant • If you are over 60-years-old • If you often have yeast infection • If self-care doesnt work • If your partner also has symptoms • If you have problems with urination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you have the symptoms for the first time • If you are pregnant • If the symptoms last for a long time • If you have pain in your lower abdomen or fever • If your partner also has symptoms • If you have problems with urination



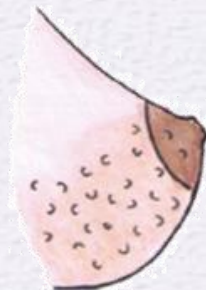
4. Breast Cancer

- Common symptom is a lump on the breast
 - Often painless
 - May cause pain or a stinging feeling on the breast, changes on skin or fluids coming out of the nipple
- Breast cancer can be found with a Mammography = x-ray of the breast
- Examining a breast lump includes palpation of the breast done by a doctor, a mammograph and an ultrasound scan

If you have any of these symptoms, contact a doctor:



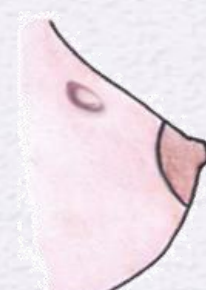
You have a painless lump on your breast



The skin texture on your breast or nipple has changed



There is discharge coming out of your nipple

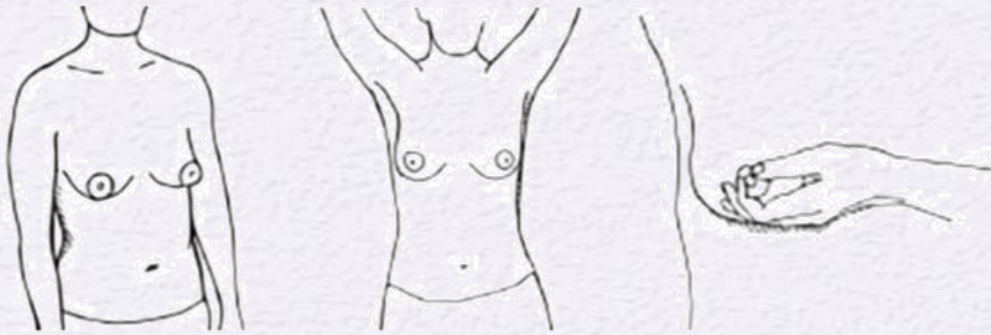


A part of the breast or nipple has turned inwards



Self-Examination of Breasts

1. Examine by looking



Look at your breasts in front of a mirror. Examine your breasts with your hands up and down. First examine your breast from the front and then from both sides. Also examine the area underneath your breast. Draw attention to the size and shape of your breasts and if there is any changes in your skin or nipple. Squeeze your nipple gently too see if any discharge come out.

2. Examine by touching



Palpate both breasts while laying on your back. Press your fingers together and go around the whole breast a bit by bit with circular movements. Repeat this 3 times: during first round the arm that is on the side of the examined breast is straight next to your body, second round the arm is straight to the side and last round straight upwards next to your head. Examine also the area on your side. If you feel something abnormal, write down your findings. If necessary, contact a nurse or a doctor.

Examine your breast monthly!

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