

Patient information

Duct Ectasia

Breast Services

What is duct ectasia?

Duct ectasia is a change in the breast which may happen in women as they become older. This is a natural process which occurs because milk ducts change in shape, becoming dilated (shorter and wider). It is a common problem. It has been suggested that by the age of 70, about 40% of women have dilated milk ducts (or duct ectasia).

How does the clinic doctor or clinic nurse know that I have duct ectasia?

When you were seen in clinic, the doctor or nurse asked you about your breast problem.

You will have been asked whether you had any nipple discharge or had noticed any change in appearance or shape of your nipple.

Some women may be aware of a coloured nipple discharge – often from more than one area on the nipple which may be yellow, green or grey in colour. The nipple may go in slightly (it looks like a crease in the nipple) or the nipple may go completely in (invert). Often this may occur in both breasts. Some women may notice crusting of the nipple.

If you are over 40 years of age you may have had a mammogram.

You will also have had a breast examination to check for any lumps or a lumpy area in your breast. This information is useful to let your doctor or nurse make a diagnosis.

Do I need any treatment?

Usually no treatment is needed for this condition. The symptoms may settle themselves. You may have the problem for several months or years.

If you notice a nipple discharge only when you squeeze the nipple, try not to do this.

Do not worry; it is a very common problem. However, if the nipple discharge changes and becomes watery or blood stained, please ask your doctor to send you back to the breast clinic to be checked.

Only in extreme cases would your doctor consider an operation. Usually this is not necessary.

Feedback

Your feedback is important to us and helps us influence care in the future.

Following your discharge from hospital or attendance at your outpatient appointment you will receive a text asking if you would recommend our service to others. Please take the time to text back, you will not be charged for the text and can opt out at any point. Your co-operation is greatly appreciated.

Further information

Breast Nurse Practitioners

Tel: 0151 706 2931

Text phone number: 18001 0151 706 2931

Breast Care Nurses

Tel: 0151 706 2927

Text phone number: 18001 0151 706 2927

Your family doctor (GP) or Practice Nurse

Breast Cancer Care:

Tel: 0808 800 6000

www.breastcancercare.org.uk

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All Trust approved information is available on request in alternative formats, including other languages, easy read, large print, audio, Braille, moon and electronically.

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