For more information, visit komen.org or call Susan G. Komen’s breast care helpline at 1-877 GO KOMEN (1-877-465-6636) Monday through Friday, 9 AM to 10 PM ET.
IF YOU FIND A
BREAST LUMP OR CHANGE

What kind of follow-up tests will I need?
Your doctor will decide which follow-up tests are needed. You may have a:

- **Mammogram** which uses X-rays to create an image of the breast. When used as a follow-up test, it may be called a diagnostic mammogram. The basic procedure is the same as a screening mammogram, but usually more views are taken with a diagnostic mammogram.

- **Breast ultrasound** which uses sound waves to make images of the breast. It can show the difference between a liquid-filled cyst and a solid mass.

- **Breast magnetic resonance imaging** (MRI) which uses magnetic fields to create an image of the breast. It can sometimes find breast cancer not seen on a mammogram.

What can follow-up tests show?
The results of follow-up tests may show:

- No signs of breast cancer. You return to your normal screening plan.

- A benign breast condition (some types may need treatment).

- The abnormal finding is probably not cancer. You need to return for screening in 4-6 months.

- A biopsy is needed to tell whether or not the breast change is cancer.

Will I need a biopsy?
If the lump is solid and the follow-up tests cannot rule out breast cancer, then a biopsy may be needed to remove some cells or a small amount of tissue. The tissue is examined under a microscope to see if it contains cancer. Usually, a needle biopsy is done first. It can show whether or not cancer cells are present. Although there’s a small chance the biopsy needle can miss the suspicious area, this is less likely when the lump can be felt and when the biopsy is guided with a breast ultrasound, breast MRI or stereotactic mammography.

If your doctor finds nothing abnormal, but you still feel something is wrong, it’s a good idea to get a second opinion. Although a lump or change may be nothing to worry about, it’s best to be sure.

The list of resources is only a suggested resource and is not a complete listing of breast health and breast cancer materials or information. The information contained herein is not meant to be used for self-diagnosis or to replace the services of a medical professional. Komen does not endorse, recommend or make any warranties or representations regarding the accuracy, completeness, timeliness, quality or non-infringement of any of the materials, products or information provided by the organizations referenced herein.