

## Why find cancer early?

In most cases the earlier a cancer is diagnosed and treated the better the outcome. Some cancers, such as breast, cervix and bowel, have screening programs to find cancer early but others do not. For most cancers you need to be aware of what is normal for you and see your doctor if you notice any changes. You know your own body best.

See your doctor if you notice changes like:

- a new lump or thickening in any part of your body
- a sore that does not heal
- unusual breast changes e.g. lumps, lumpiness, a thickened area, unusual nipple discharge, a nipple that turns inwards (if it hasn't always been that way), a change in shape or colour, an unusual pain or a change in skin texture.
- a spot or mole that is new or has changed in shape, size, colour or bleeds
- unusual bleeding or discharge
- any vaginal bleeding after menopause
- persistent indigestion or difficulty swallowing
- any changes in your bowel habits e.g. diarrhoea, constipation or blood in the bowel action
- any unexpected weight loss
- coughing, hoarseness or a sore throat that doesn't go away.

These signs don't mean you have cancer but it is important to have them checked by your local doctor. Cancer Council SA provides advice and information on early detection through the Cancer Council 13 11 20

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