

**Doctor:** Good morning Ms. Dolly! What brought you here today?

**Patient:** Hello doctor. I'm here because of a lump I noticed on my left breast.

**Doctor:** I see. When did you notice it?

**Patient:** Yesterday. After taking a shower, I did a breast self-exam and I came across a lump.

**Doctor:** Ok. Can I have a look at it?

**Patient:** Sure. No prob.

**Doctor:** Thanks. I need you to take off your blouse and lie down on the table please. Now, I want you to put your left arm under your head.

**Patient:** Okay.

**Doctor:** Good. Just tell me if it hurts.

(Doctor palpates the left breast)

**Patient:** Can you feel it doctor?

**Doctor:** Actually Ms. Dolly, I didn't feel any lump at all.

**Patient:** Are you sure doctor? I felt it yesterday. But it wasn't that big.

**Doctor:** Yes. I'm certain there is none.

**Patient:** Well, that's a relief doctor! (smiles) I thought I had a tumor.

**Doctor:** It's great news indeed. Anyway, it's a good thing that you perform breast self-exam. Uhm, do you have a family history of breast cancer?

**Patient:** Unfortunately yes doctor. My mother and an aunt died of breast cancer. That is why I am very conscious when it comes to my breasts. I know I am at risk of developing the same thing. Right?

**Doctor:** Yes. That is why monthly breast self-examination is important. It can help us detect breast cancer early.

**Patient:** I know doctor. Aside from the monthly breast self-exam, is there another way of determining tumors? I mean, I am already 35 years old. And they say that the risk increases with age.

**Doctor:** That is correct Ms. Dolly. Actually, women with a much higher-than-average risk of breast cancer should start breast cancer screening at least by age 30. This might include a breast ultrasound, breast MRI, or an annual mammogram.

**Patient:** Yeah. I heard about that. Can you tell me more about the mammogram doctor?

**Doctor:** A mammogram is an x-ray test of your breasts to screen for breast problems such as a lump. Many small tumors can be seen on a mammogram before they can be felt by a woman or her doctor.

**Patient:** (nods) So, does it stop me from getting breast cancer?

**Doctor:** The mammogram is an important tool used for early detection of breast cancer. Cancer is most easily treated and cured when it is discovered in an early stage.

**Patient:** Okay.

**Doctor:** With your family history of breast cancer Ms. Dolly, I recommend you undergo a mammogram annually. This will help us detect early signs of breast cancer. It will also help you to put your mind at ease.

**Patient:** I agree doctor. When can I get one?

**Doctor:** (smiles) I'll order a mammogram for you then.

**Patient:** Thank you doctor.

**Doctor:** You are welcome.

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## **TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE:**

1. When is the best time to do a monthly breast-self exam? Why?
2. What instances can affect the accuracy of the mammogram result? Give two.