

**What type of people are at high risk of diabetes?**

- λ Family history of diabetes
- λ Obesity
- λ Age greater than 45 years
- λ Certain ethnic groups (African-Americans, Hispanic-Americans)
- λ Diabetes during pregnancy or baby weighing more than 9 pounds
- λ High blood pressure
- λ High blood levels of triglycerides (a type of fat molecule)



## Be aware of breast problems

TAREQ SALAHUDDIN

Breast cancer is one of the leading causes of mortality among women in the world today. Despite all the increase in technology, advances in surgery, development of new and stronger cytotoxic (cancer killing) drugs, the death rate from cancer each year is not any better now that it was a decade ago. Breast cancer is one of the common cancers in women. This breast cancer could be totally cured only with early diagnosis. Herein lies the key to future success. That is the reason we are writing this story. If breast cancer is not detected until it has advanced to a state where it has spread to another parts of the body, then the outlook is bad news. The chances of salvaging the life are small. That's why doctors are continually proclaiming the message for woman to be aware, to check, to double check and to keep on checking for the rest of their lives.

**Every woman should be proficient in regular breast examination**

Every woman should carry out on a regular basis of examination of her own breasts from the late teens. This must be an ongoing exercise for the rest of one's life. It is as simple and straightforward as that.

Certainly breast cancer in the younger age groups is uncommon. Traditionally 45 years and over is the cancer age segment. This increases with age, so that many women in their 60s will contract it. Nevertheless it may strike younger women. But if women develop a regular routine of breast examination and persist with this for life, many more would be picked up at a very early stage where a cure is highly probable.

**What is the routine with breast examinations?**

The ideal time is to perform this is just after a period. Many women develop tense, tender breasts just prior to menstruation and they may become sore and uncomfortable. But when a period starts large amounts of fluid are excreted. Breast fullness tends to decrease in apparent size and this is the best time to check. There are many simple ways to carrying it out. Many do it under the shower, when the body is wet and the hands soapy. Gently feel or palpate the entire breast area, covering each quadrant and then concentrating on the nipple area and parts underneath. It takes only a few minutes. If there is any abnormality or strange lump, this could be suspect.

Some women have fairly full breasts and may find it hard to tell if there are lumps present. It is often simpler to examine them when lying on the bed, on one's

back. Then, similarly using the hand and fingers, each segment of the breast can be carefully felt, using a firm, even but gentle circular motion. Do it systematically. Ideally divide the breast mentally into four quadrants. Then work clockwise around each segment. Finally check the central nipple region. Use the right hand for the left breast and the left hand for the right side.

**What does a cancer feel like?**

Typically it feels like a hard lump, a bit like a pea or ball-bearing either just under the skin or deeper in the fatty tissue.

inner lower quadrant accounts for the rest, about 5%.

**Are all abnormal breast lumps due to cancer?**

Certainly not. Probably only about one or two lumps in every 100 turn out to be cancer. These are the ones that must not be missed, which means that any abnormal breast lump should be checked by the doctors.

**What will the doctor do with the breast lump?**

It may depend upon the patient's age. Younger women are highly likely to develop cysts (Sac formed in the body,

stage and consulting with a physician. The best way to prevent breast cancer is by early detection and treatment, before secondary spread occurs.

**Is it better to visit the doctor for a regular breast examination than trying the do-it-yourself business on an amateur basis?**

Having professional guidance is always a good idea, especially in the early stages. But it is also worthwhile occasionally sitting in front of a mirror checking the appearance of the breasts. Check the relative sizes, whether a nipple seems odd, whether they are level or withdrawn or inverted. Whether there is any dimpling of the skin in any part, for sometimes this is the first sign of a more superficial cancer. A nipple discharge, especially if bloodstained is also a telltale sign. In short, if there is any abnormality, report it at once to the doctor who will check, refer you to a doctor or a clinic specializing in breast examinations. Never neglect at the preliminary stage which can further increase and make complications, even turn to death. Always remember that a stitch in time saves nine.

**Mammograms**

A mammogram is an ordinary low-dose X-ray image of the breast that shows fine details of the internal soft tissues. But this must be done after a doctor's advice. For women under the age of 50 are not routinely performed unless there is a special suspect reason. The breast is very sensitive to X-rays and repeated examinations in particular may in fact initiate a breast cancer! In women over the age of 50 where the risk factors escalate are often carried out by the suggestion of a physician. So manual self examination will always remain an essential part of early diagnosis.

**Breastfeeding**

Breastfeeding seems to reduce the risk of subsequent breast cancer. This, too, is good news and should encourage women to breastfeed. Reproduction stimulates the breasts to activity. Regular breast usage for the reason protects the woman from breast cancer! So don't deprive your child from the gift of nature which is his human right.

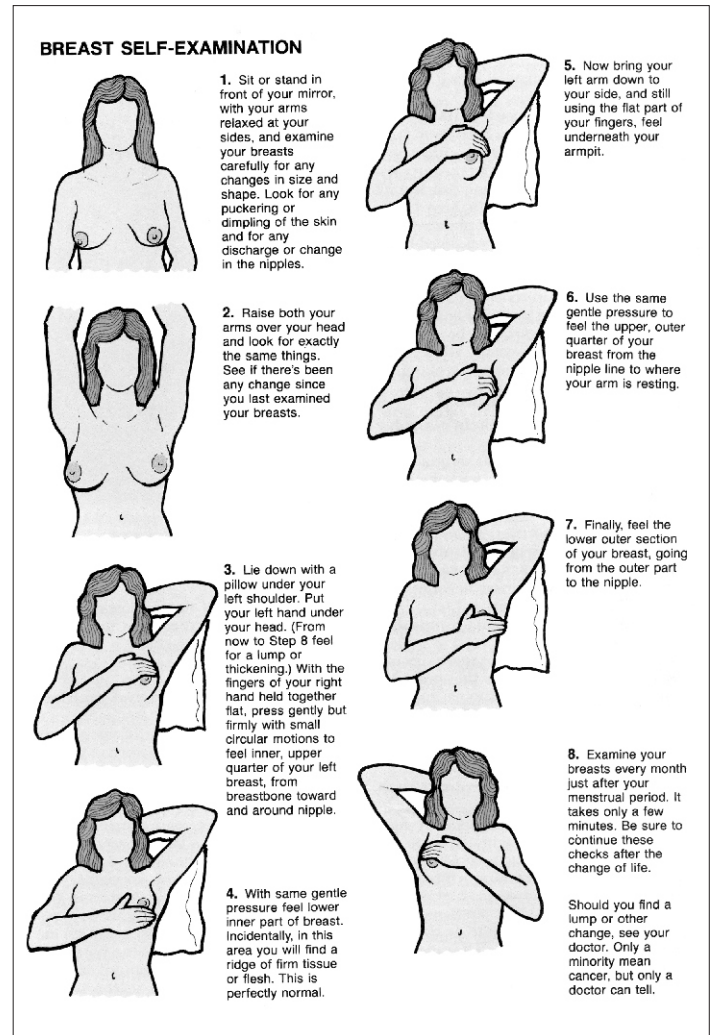
**Reconstructive surgery of breasts**

Breasts are considered a vital secondary sexual organ of the woman. Many women do not agree for the necessary surgery of breasts. Sometimes it is their husbands who force women to carry on with their ill breasts. But surgery should be done immediately if it is badly needed. There is good news for them that there are scopes for reconstructive surgery after the removal of ill portion of breast.

containing liquid matter) in the breast. The doctor may advise a biopsy. A small segment of breast tissue is removed and the pathologist examines it under the microscope. If there is any suspicion of it being cancer, the doctor may also prepare for further surgery, for if the pathology report says "cancer", it is wise to proceed to remove the growth.

**Treatment**

There are several treatment methods of breast cancer which depends upon the cases e.g. severity, age, particular's condition etc. Breast cancer may need chemotherapy, radiotherapy and even surgery which depend upon the condition of the patient. The doctor will select treatment, but it is important to find out the disease at the initial



## What you need to know about Liver cirrhosis

This is a liver disease characterised by a gradual annihilation of the liver cells. These cells are progressively replaced with fibrous tissue, which then leads to hardening.

**What to look for**

Usually no symptoms appear until the disease has entered the late stages as the disease tends to come on gradually. When they occur, symptoms can include:

- nausea, vomiting, and loss of appetite.
- unusual gain or loss of weight.
- yellow coloration of the skin and eyes (see Jaundice).
- dark urine.
- bloody, black stools, or unusually light-colored stools.
- vomiting of blood.
- thinning hair
- abdominal swelling.
- itching.
- swollen feet or legs.
- red palms.
- sleep disturbances and confusion.
- fatigue or loss of stamina.
- enlarged breasts in men.
- loss of sex drive and menstrual problems in women.
- spider like blood vessels on chest and shoulders.

In severe cases, mental disturbances. With Cirrhosis, the liver eventually loses ability to function as required. With severe damage, the patient cannot function mentally and coma and possibly death can result. As well as this, because the blood cannot flow through the liver due to the scarring, it collects in the veins and they may burst under the enormous pressure. In some cases this pressure becomes so great that the vessels rupture.

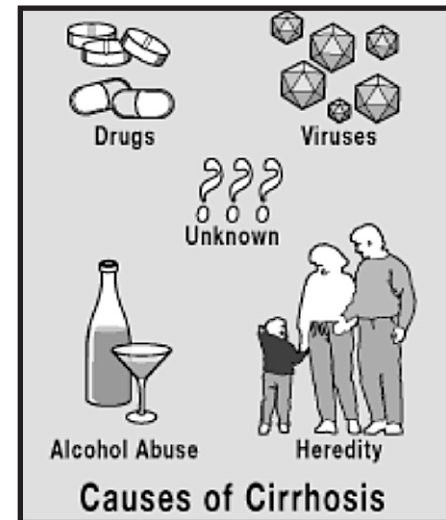
Once the liver is damaged through cirrhosis, it cannot be cured except through a liver transplant. It can often be helped in the early stages though.

The wellness of the liver is important as it has many duties to perform for the proper functioning of the body. The liver is the largest of the body organs and performs the following essential functions.

**Liver functions**

detoxifies and rids the body of harmful chemicals, alcohol, caffeine by acting like a filter.

produces bile which it stores in the gall bladder. Bile is then released into the small intestine as needed to help break down fatty foods.



regulates the composition of the blood traps old red blood cells

helps remove virus and bacteria (it performs this function as part of the immune system).

With so many tasks to perform it is essential to have a fully functioning and healthy liver, however, it can still function but not quite as effectively. The liver possesses an amazing ability to repair itself, especially if the cirrhosis is caught in the early stages and the causes of it's malfunction have been removed.

The parts of the liver that are scarred will never be returned to normal. If the causes of cirrhosis are not removed and more and more cells are affected, the rest of the healthy cells are left to do all the work - this is where problems will become obvious. This is why it's important to identify the underlying causes as soon as possible and begin taking steps to eliminate them.

**Causes**

The most common cause of cirrhosis is the excessive consumption of alcohol over a long period. Other possible causes include viruses, genetic deficiencies, prolonged obstruction of bile flow, and long periods of exposure to drugs and other toxic substances.

The link between alcohol and cirrhosis is well documented. Studies show that while moderate drinking may actually help prevent strokes and heart disease, heavy drinking has a clearly harmful effect on the liver.

Excessive drinking almost inevitably causes some liver damage, but it does not always lead to cirrhosis however the liver can become inflamed. This only lasts for a week or two but can eventually lead to cir-

rhosis. Even light drinkers who go on a binge for several days can develop a condition known as fatty liver which causes the cells of the liver to become swollen. This condition can be painful and can cause the eyes to take on a yellow appearance.

Hepatitis is the next most common cause of cirrhosis after alcoholism the most frequent cause of cirrhosis is hepatitis, which inflames the liver.

**Traditional Treatment**

Treating the cause of cirrhosis is the best way to recovery from this disease.

Remedies are dependant on the cause of the disease and what stage it is up to. If alcohol is the cause of your cirrhosis you must stop drinking immediately. If you continue to drink after you have been diagnosed with cirrhosis, there is more chance of the condition becoming fatal.

Liver transplants are available to people as a last resort and there are certain people who are not permitted to undergo this operation.

**Dietary Considerations**

Good nutrition can help the liver. Freshly squeezed juices from carrots, beetroot and celery, carrot and apple, grapefruit and pear juice. Eat more leafy green vegetables, tossed salads including cabbage rocket lettuce, with a dressing of olive oil and lemon juice. Sprouts, beans, broccoli, brussel sprouts and all the range of leafy Chinese and English spinach.

Protein is needed for the healthy functioning of the liver but it is important to monitor how much you are consuming - too little is as bad as too much. Check with a doctor or nutritionist for the amount of protein that's right for you.

Also check with your doctor about the taking of high doses of vitamins, as these can be harmful to your liver.

**Prevention**

Do not drink to excess and if you have been diagnosed with Cirrhosis stop drinking immediately.

Avoid uncooked shellfish.

Avoid mixing alcohol and drugs.

Avoid exposure to industrial chemicals, which can enter the bloodstream and cause liver damage.

Maintain a healthy diet.

Be careful to avoid contracting hepatitis.

**Reader's opinion**

## Doctor mothers --- please avoid private practice!

As mothers we have a responsibility to look after our children! It is not enough to serve our country by serving during office hours only. We also have a responsibility to look after our children's need, expectations, food, safety, and overall feelings! In this new century, they expect to share their happiness and pain with us their mothers. We should ensure this can occur till their teen age! I personally consider this as part of our moral responsibility. It is a part of serving our nation, by growing confident, self-reliant children, as well.

**I was very busy with my career, till my road traffic accident. Now, I realise, he expected special foods, toys, some beautiful things, to share his school enjoyment, his teacher's punishment, etc.**

to share his school enjoyment, his teacher's punishment, etc. I feel embarrassed to admit my good reputation! But mostly for that reason, I never thought of not practicing! To tell the truth, it was my hard work at my working place that caused me to be nominated for foreign fellowships! While my chief boss or director general came to visit my place of work, he was always happy to notice the improvement of the Maternal and Child Healthcare at my hospital that he kept me on for 4 years in one place, which is uncommon. Any way, my ambition has

brought me to this painful state. But, please do not deprive your loving baby from all kinds of care! Please do not commit mistakes like me. And always be a loving mother to a satisfied and fulfilled baby.

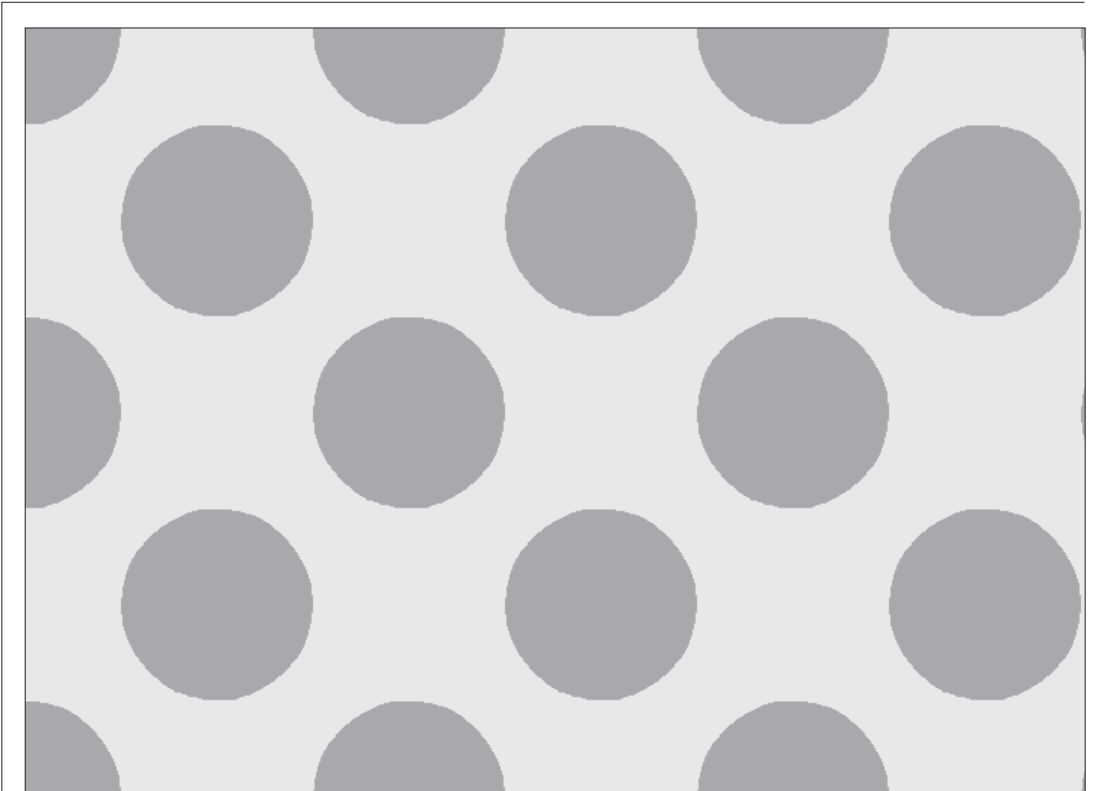
Dr Lailun Nahar

This is a letter from one of our Star Health readers. We urge all our readers to write to us more frequently so that we may publish your concerns. However, Star Health is not responsible for the opinions expressed by our readers.

I am advocating this issue from my bitter experience. Following a serious road traffic accident (RTA), I am laying disabled confined in a house. My only son aged 15 is my only inspiration to survive in this world! My all attention is confined to his well being! But I am very sad that my son feels irritated to notice my attention.

I can remember his weeping, during my departure for my private doctor's chambers, almost regularly! One incident hurt me very badly; I noticed that my maid had kept him sitting on a table in the kitchen! His movement might have created trouble for her work! One night when I came back from the my chambers, tired and exhausted, he rose on the bed and kissed my cheeks!

I was very busy with my career, till my road traffic accident. Now, I realise, he expected special foods, toys, some beautiful things,



## Management of dog and snake bite

**DOG BITE**

Dog bite could sometimes be very serious. In addition to the risk of rabies there is the additional risk of infection. If the animal is suffering from rabies there is the possibility of it being transmitted to the person bitten. This condition is also called hydrophobia. The dog that bites a person should not be killed. It should be kept under observation for a ten-day period. If the dog remains healthy after this period then the risk of rabies to the person bitten is low. However, there is still the threat of rabies occurring sometimes, months or years after the bite even if the animal does not die during the ten-day period. The aim of First Aid in a case of

dog bite is to prevent rabies, to reduce the risk of infection and to get medical aid as soon as possible.

**Management**

1. Wipe the saliva away from the wound using a clean cloth or handkerchief. Do not come into contact with the saliva that gets wiped away.
2. Wash the wound thoroughly with plenty of soap and water.
3. Cover the wound with a dry, sterile dressing. Do not put carbolic acid, nitric acid etc. on the wound.
4. Get medical aid or send the patient to the hospital as soon as possible.

**SNAKE BITE**

There are more than 2500 different kinds of snakes. Only about 200 of them are venomous. All snake bites are not fatal. Only a very small quantity of venom may have been injected and some people may even die not from the venom but from fear.

The aim of First Aid is to reassure the person, take steps to stop the spread of the venom and to obtain medical aid.

**Management**

1. Make the patient lie down, give him complete rest, calm and reassure him.
2. Do not make him walk.
3. If the bite is on the arm or leg, apply a constrictive bandage on

the heart side of the bite tight enough to obstruct and stop the flow of the venom to all parts of the body. Don't tie it too firmly. 4. If water is not available and you have no cracks on your lips, tongue and the inside of the cheeks, you can suck the wound and spit out the poisonous material repeatedly. 5. Wash the wound with soap and water. Flush the wound with a lot of water. 6. Cover the wound with a sterile dressing. 7. Get medical aid or send the person on a stretcher to the hospital as quickly as possible. If the snake has been killed carry it to the hospital for identification. Should breathing fail, commence artificial respiration.