Instructions For Breast Self-Examination

1. Positions
   A. Standing in front of a mirror, check your breasts for discharge from the nipple and puckering, dimpling or scaling of the skin.
   B. Still standing in front of the mirror, press your hands firmly on your hips, bow slightly and pull your shoulders and elbows forward. Again, look closely for changes in your breast shape and contour.
   C. Now clasp your hands behind your head and press your hands forward. As you do this, look for changes in the shape or contour of your breasts.
   D. Lie flat on your back with a pillow or folded towel under the shoulder of the breast to be examined. Or use the side lying position. Lie on the opposite side to be examined. Rotate the shoulder (on the same side as the breast to be examined) back to the flat surface.

2. Perimeter
   The examination area is bounded by a line which extends down from the middle of the armpit to just beneath the breast, continues across along the underside of the breast to the middle of the breast bone, then moves up to and along the collar bone and back to the middle of the armpit. Most breast cancers occur in the upper outer area of the breast.

3. Palpation with Pads of Fingers
   Use the pads of 3-4 fingers to examine every inch of your breast tissue. Move your fingers in circles about the size of a dime. Do not lift your fingers from your breast between palpations. You can use powder or lotion to help your fingers glide from one spot to the next.

4. Pressure
   Use varying levels of pressure for each palpation, from light to deep, to examine the full thickness of your breast tissue.

5. Pattern of Search
   Palpate carefully beneath the nipple. (Any incision should also be carefully examined from end to end.) Start in the armpit, proceed downward to the lower boundary. Move a finger’s width toward the middle and continue palpating upward until you reach the collar bone. Repeat this until you have covered all the breast tissue.

6. Practice with Feedback
   It’s important that you perform a breast self-exam while your instructor watches to ensure you’re doing it correctly. Practice your skills under supervision until you feel comfortable and confident.

7. Plan of Action
   - Discuss the American Cancer Society cancer detection guidelines with your health care professional.
   - Schedule your clinical breast exam and mammogram annually.
   - Do a monthly self-exam. Ask your health care professional for feedback on your self-exam skills.
   - Report any changes to your health care professional.
### Osteoporosis Screening

The Dexa Scan (Dual Energy X-Ray Absorptiometry) machine is used to analyze bone mineral content to help determine a patient’s risk of osteoporosis. The test is fast, easy and painless. The machine uses a thin, invisible beam of low-dose x-rays that help determine the patient’s bone mineral density. If you are at risk for Osteoporosis, your doctor can prescribe medications for treatment.

**You are at an increased risk for osteoporosis if:**

- You are a small, white female
- You have a family history of osteoporosis
- You are post menopausal
- You don’t exercise
- You drink excessive amounts of alcohol

### General X-Ray

In addition to women’s services, Selma Carlson Diagnostic Center also offers “Walk-In” digital x-ray for patients needing an immediate examination. Reports are usually faxed to your physician the same day.

### Results

Board-certified radiologists at Sierra Vista Regional Medical Center will interpret your tests and send a detailed report to your physician. Images can also be viewed in the physician’s office. Your physician will advise you on the results and discuss what further procedures or treatment options, if any, are needed. You will also receive a results letter from Selma Carlson Diagnostic Center for all mammogram examinations.

### Breast Self-Examination Guide

#### When should you do a Breast Self-Examination?

Every woman, no matter what age, should do a breast self-examination once a month. The best time to do one is about a week after your menstrual cycle. Check yourself on the first day of each month if you have gone through menopause. If you have had a hysterectomy, ask your doctor when the best time is for you.

**Monthly self-examinations are especially important for women in high-risk groups.**

- Over age 50
- Never had children
- Had first child after age 30
- Over age 40 and have a relative with breast cancer—especially if the relative developed the cancer before menopause
- Over age 50 with a history of breast cancer

### Stereotactic Breast Biopsy

If a lump or change in the breast is identified, a small biopsy is often performed to determine a diagnosis. The procedure is computer-guided to help ensure accurate tissue sampling during the biopsy. Unlike most facilities, the dedicated breast biopsy equipment at Selma Carlson Diagnostic Center offers patients the ability to lie down during this procedure, improving patient comfort. Most women who have a biopsy are not diagnosed with cancer. More than 80% of all breast lesions present no health risk to the patient.

### Services

- **Digital Mammograms with Mammopad®**
  - Even with routine breast self-examination, it’s important that every woman take advantage of the latest developments in low-dosage, digital mammography. Digital mammograms can detect the presence of a lump so small, it’s impossible to feel. To help ease the discomfort often associated with mammograms, Selma Carlson Diagnostic Center uses the Mammopad breast cushion. This soft foam cushion provides a warmer, more comfortable mammo.