



PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Lobular Carcinoma in Situ (LCIS)

This information will help you understand what lobular carcinoma in situ (LCIS) is, and how it can affect your risk of getting breast cancer. It also explains what you can do to prevent breast cancer.

About LCIS

LCIS is a condition where there is an overgrowth of cells that line the ducts (small tubes that carry the breastmilk to your nipples) or the lobules (small round sacs that produce breastmilk).

LCIS isn't breast cancer, but LCIS can increase your risk of getting breast cancer. Healthcare providers can find out you have LCIS by doing a breast biopsy (taking a small sample of tissue). If your biopsy shows that you have LCIS, your risk of getting breast cancer in either breast may be slightly higher than the average person.

Breast Cancer Screening

Because of the increased breast cancer risk, people with LCIS should have regular breast exams and breast imaging. You and your healthcare provider will decide what type of breast imaging is best for you, based on your personal history. It's recommended that you have a physical exam with a breast specialist every 6 to 12 months, as well as breast imaging every year.

Lowering Your Breast Cancer Risk

Medications

Taking certain medications can help lower your risk of getting breast cancer. Studies show that the following medications may lower your risk of breast cancer by more than half. Talk with your healthcare provider about starting medication so you can discuss what's best for you.

Tamoxifen and raloxifene

Tamoxifen (Nolvadex[®], Soltamox[®]) and raloxifene (Evista[®]) are medications that lower your risk of breast cancer by blocking the effects of estrogen. Estrogen is a natural hormone your body makes that can make some breast tumors grow. These medications only lower your risk of getting a certain type of breast cancer called estrogen receptor-positive breast cancer, which is the most common type. They won't lower your risk of getting estrogen receptor-negative cancers.

You can only take raloxifene if you've gone through menopause (permanent end of your menstrual cycle). You can take tamoxifen before or after menopause.

Aromatase inhibitors

Aromatase inhibitors are medications that stop an enzyme called aromatase from changing other hormones into estrogen. One of these medications, exemestane (Aromasin[®]), has been shown to lower the risk of breast cancer in people with LCIS. You should only take these medications if you've gone through menopause.

Prophylactic mastectomy

Some people may choose to have their breasts removed to prevent breast cancer. This is called a bilateral prophylactic (PRO-fih-LAK-tik) mastectomy. This surgery is sometimes used to lower the risk of breast cancer in people with LCIS.

Lifestyle changes

There are also lifestyle changes you can make to lower your breast cancer risk if you have LCIS. You can discuss these lifestyle changes with your healthcare provider.

If you have any questions, contact a member of your healthcare team directly.
If you're a patient at MSK and you need to reach a provider after 5:00 PM,
during the weekend, or on a holiday, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

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