Medanta Breast Services

Medanta Breast Clinic

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Breast cancer is the most common cancer affecting women in India. It has been observed that India will have the largest number of new breast cancer cases detected every year. Other disturbing facts are:

- Breast cancer is rapidly becoming the number one cancer in women in India.
- One in 22 women in India is likely to suffer from breast cancer during her lifetime.
- It is rising in the younger age group (35-45 years).
- Only one in 10 lumps (10 per cent) in the breast is cancerous.

At Medanta Breast Service we are aware of this and feel it is important to spread awareness and develop means of detecting breast cancer early, so that cure rates are maximized.

Worldwide, there are specialised breast units that deal with patients with breast diseases, including breast cancer.

Medanta Breast Service is a dedicated service created to diagnose and treat the entire spectrum of conditions affecting breasts.

Our breast unit has been designed on the guidelines laid down by the European Union Society of Mastology (EUSOMA) and is based on two fundamental principles, evidence-based medicine and multidisciplinary approach.

With our model of evidence-based medicine, our patients receive highest level of care in surgery, chemotherapy or radiotherapy as prevalent globally. Our individualised treatments for patients use new molecular predictors of recurrence with techniques like microarrays and RT-PCR (Mammaprint, Oncotype Dx).

Such advanced technologies have enabled us to quantify the risk of relapse and tailor therapies accurately.

Our state-of-the-art screening and diagnostic services include:

- Full field digital mammography

- Ultrasound
- Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)
- Image guided breast biopsies (stereotactic)
- MRI guided biopsies (only centre in India)
- Mamnotome
- Gamma probe for Sentinel Node Biopsy
- PET CT scans

Medanta Breast Service calls on world class expertise, with a multidisciplinary team equipped to offer holistic and personalised care for breast cancer patients.

Specialised Clinics

- Breast cancer clinic/Rapid diagnostic clinic
- Mastalgia clinic
- Family history clinic
- Lymphedema services
- Breast reconstruction and oncoplasty clinic

Rapid Diagnostic Clinic

It is a one-stop clinic for tests that are necessary to diagnose breast problems viz.

- Breast examination
- Ultrasound scans
- Mammograms
- Small needle biopsies

It is operated by our multi-disciplinary team comprising of:

- Specialist breast surgeons
- Trained breast nurses
- Specialist breast radiologists
- Specialist breast pathologists and specialist medical oncologists (these are involved in the final decision making process as apt for
This clinic at Medanta offers very coordinated services, from imaging to same day diagnosis of cancer or benign breast conditions, initial treatment planning, scheduling for treatment or surgery, where appropriate.

We offer full range of surgical options to enable breast conservation and oncoplastic surgery.

We also advise on genetic counselling and cancer risk assessment besides educational programs for health-care professionals, patients and families.

Our care with a multidisciplinary team available at one facility reduces waiting time and the need for multiple visits for our patients.

We promote good health and cancer prevention through surveillance and early diagnosis in women with increased risks.

Our innovative treatment strategies and a supportive environment make treatment as affective and comfortable as possible.

**Breast Self Examination**

Often self evaluation helps in early diagnosis of breast cancers. This involves following steps

**Step 1**

Stand in front of a mirror with hands on the hips

- Check the shape and size of breasts
- Shape and position of both nipples

Look for signs like

- Dimpling or puckering of skin
- Any bulges
- Nipples pulled in
- Redness or rash over nipples

**Step 2**

Raise arm above the head with one hand under the armpit, feel lumps, if any

**Step 3**

With thumb and fingers, gently press nipples and check if there is any watery or blood discharge

**Step 4**

Lie down with shoulders resting on pillow. Put one hand under the head and examine breasts with the other hand. Run your hand in gentle circular motions over the breast and feel for lumps.

Normally by the time a lump can be felt, it is likely to have been there for quite some time and the longer it’s been there undetected, the more the chances of it to grow and spread.

**Screening for Breast Cancer**

Breast screening is a method of identifying cancers at early stages. It is done by performing x-rays of the breast known as mammograms. The mammogram can detect small changes in breast tissue which may indicate cancers, which are too small to be felt either by the patient or by a doctor.

Usually when the mammogram is normal no further tests are done but if any abnormality is detected further tests are conducted. These may include a breast ultrasound or in a few cases a breast MRI. A needle biopsy of the lump is also recommended sometimes and is done as an outpatient procedure.
Advantages of Screening

- It detects cancers at a stage when treatment is most likely to be effective.
- As the cancer is detected when it is very small, chances of breast conserving surgery increases, allowing patients to save breasts.
- It saves lives by reducing the risk of death from breast cancer.

Disadvantages of Screening

- Mammograms sometimes have to be repeated to better assess an abnormality seen in the initial mammogram.
- It may raise a false alarm by showing an abnormality which on further tests might not prove to be a cancer.
- Breast screening occasionally misses a cancer

**Specialised Treatments**

**Breast Conservation Surgery (BCS)**

‘Breast Conservation’ is a term used for surgeries that involve removing only the cancer and not the entire breast.

This is appropriate in patients in whom the tests before surgery have shown that it is possible to do so.

BCS is a balance between maintaining the shape of the breast and at the same time ensuring that it is oncologically safe for the patient.

**Oncoplastic Surgery**

It is important that the breast conserving operation does not leave the patient with a deformed/disfigured breast. Specialist breast surgeons achieve normal cosmesis by mobilising the remaining breast tissue to fill the gap created by the removed cancer lump. This allows larger lumps to be removed without compromising on the safety of the procedure.

**Sentinel Node Biopsy**

The first potential place where breast cancer cells can spread is in the lymph glands in axilla (arm pits).

Lymph glands are tiny structures that act as filters and trap abnormal cells.

In traditional breast surgeries, most of the lymph glands were removed during the first breast cancer operation. This in turn helped determine whether other treatments (e.g. chemotherapy) are needed. It also prevented the cancer from spreading to the lymph glands in future.

However, removing all the glands in the armpit had its own complications like numbness and increased risk of infection in the arm and swelling of the arm (lymphedema).

Sentinel Node Biopsy is now a reliable and safe technique that avoids most of the complications associated with traditional axillary surgeries.

Performed by specialist breast surgeons, Sentinel Node Biopsy uses a combination of a blue dye and a safe radioactive tracer. It is possible to identify the sentinel or ‘gatekeeper’ lymph node(s) to assess whether the cancer cells have spread to the axilla.

Based on the theory that cancer spreads to the lymph nodes, it is believed that if the sentinel node is uninvolved, the remaining nodes are highly unlikely to have cancer.

Not all patients are found suitable for this procedure (especially those diagnosed with large tumours or those that have enlarged glands). In the event that sentinel node is found ‘positive’ for cancer, the rest of the axillary glands are removed.