

# What is a breast medicine specialist?

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Many people think that a breast health specialist only treats cancer, but the truth is that these doctors handle a wide range of breast-related

conditions.

Dr. Lauren Cornell, a Mayo Clinic breast medicine specialist, says there are many ways people can benefit from seeing a breast medicine expert.

Dr. Cornell talks with patients about screenings and checks for any potential cancer concerns. She says many factors, including [family history](#), contribute to a person's risk of developing [breast cancer](#).

"It can also include their mammographic breast density, their reproductive history, hormone exposures over the course of their lifetime. The list goes on and on," she explains.

A breast health specialist also can provide patients with an individualized cancer risk assessment and then use the information to develop a prevention plan.

"It's important to discuss lifestyle factors to lower their breast cancer risk, which would include regular cardiovascular exercise, maintaining a [healthy body weight](#), limiting alcohol and focusing on a whole food, [plant-based diet](#)," says Dr. Cornell.

Reasons to see a breast health specialist:

- Changes in size or shape of the breast.
- Lump in breast or armpit.
- Nipple discharge.
- Genetic testing.

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