



**Inova**  
Breast Care  
Institute



**INOVA<sup>®</sup> CANCER  
SERVICES**



At the Inova Breast Care Institute, our commitment is to provide expert care for you, every step of the way. Our multidisciplinary team of more than 80 experts provides a full range of comprehensive services and programs, from diagnosis through treatment and recovery.

With access points throughout Northern Virginia, Inova provides breast cancer care for more than 1,000 women each year — more than any other healthcare provider in the area.

Call us at **703-916-2700** to learn more.

### **Diagnostic Studies**

Inova offers user-friendly diagnostic imaging facilities conveniently located throughout Northern Virginia. To give you the benefit of the latest technology, Inova has invested in digital mammography, which is especially effective in detecting some of the most serious forms of breast

cancer in younger women and women with dense breasts. Other diagnostic studies can include breast ultrasound (sonograms), breast MRI, stereotactic breast biopsy, and MRI-guided biopsy.

## **If the Diagnosis Is Breast Cancer**

If your diagnosis is breast cancer, you can take comfort knowing that the Inova Breast Care Institute is staffed by a multidisciplinary group of surgeons, as well as medical, surgical and radiation oncologists, patient navigators and support staff that will use innovative approaches and advanced technologies to treat even the most challenging cases.

### **Breast Care Navigator**

A diagnosis of breast cancer often brings fear and uncertainty. As you embark on this unfamiliar journey, you and your loved ones need the educational and emotional support provided by a breast cancer navigator.

Our breast care navigators are registered nurses with specialized training and expertise in breast cancer. With extensive knowledge of breast disease and the healthcare system, your navigator will ensure that you have access to every available resource while guiding you and your loved ones from diagnosis through treatment and recovery.

Your breast care navigator will provide free and confidential services such as:

- Help expediting and coordinating diagnostic studies and physician visits

- Assurance of timely and accurate exchange of information among the physicians overseeing your care and your referring physician
- Access to clinical trials (when applicable)
- Clinical education (printed and online materials)
- Referrals to hospital- and community-based social and support services
- Resources to resolve communication barriers, transportation issues and financial difficulties
- Resources and services for family members and caregivers

To speak with one of our breast care navigators, please call **703-916-2700**.

## Treating Your Breast Cancer

### Surgery

Surgery is often the first line of attack in the fight against breast cancer. If your cancer is detected early, you may be able to undergo surgery that conserves much of your breast. The type of breast cancer that you have will help your surgeon determine the best procedure for you:

- **Lumpectomy** — Removes the breast tumor (lump) and some of the healthy surrounding tissue
- **Mastectomy** — Removes all of the breast tissue

- **Lymph-node evaluation** — Often takes place during lumpectomy and mastectomy, if the cancer has spread beyond the milk duct
- **Breast reconstruction** — Rebuilds the breast immediately following surgery or at a later date

## Radiation Therapy

You may need to undergo radiation therapy to shrink your cancer or destroy any cancerous cells that can remain after surgery. Your radiation oncologist will design your individualized therapy program using the most advanced technology available:

- **External-beam therapy** — Uses a linear accelerator to aim a beam of high-energy radiation at the affected area
- **Intensity-modulated radiation therapy** — Delivers highly focused beams of radiation that precisely target the cancerous area while preserving surrounding healthy tissue





- **Brachytherapy** (partial breast irradiation) — Uses a high-dose-rate brachytherapy source inserted into a specially designed balloon catheter placed within the tumor cavity following breast-conserving surgery

## Medical Oncology

A medical oncologist will determine if you need chemotherapy (oral or intravenous medication) or anti-estrogen therapy to destroy any cancer cells that may have spread from your breast to another part of your body. Because these drugs so effectively interfere with rapidly dividing cells, they may also affect your blood, hair, intestinal tract, mouth and nose, nails and vagina. New chemotherapy drugs, and medicines that relieve side effects, will make it easier for you to tolerate chemotherapy than ever before.

## Rehabilitation, Education and Support Services

In addition to your breast care navigator, Inova offers a number of services to support you during your breast cancer journey.

 ***Life with Cancer***<sup>®</sup>

Many of the education, information and support services your breast care navigator will recommend are available through Life with Cancer<sup>®</sup>. This community-funded program provides a continuum of support for people affected by cancer — at no

cost. There's no need to face breast cancer alone when you can benefit from such resources as:

- Pre-operative classes
- Breast cancer support groups for patients and partners
- Metastatic breast cancer support groups
- Programs for children and teens
- Educational consultations, classes and seminars
- "Look Good ... Feel Better" (co-sponsored with American Cancer Society)
- Short-term supportive counseling
- Recovery exercise programs
- Lymphedema group
- Information about complementary approaches

For more information about Life with Cancer or a monthly calendar of events, call **703-698-2526** or visit [lifewithcancer.org](http://lifewithcancer.org).

There are also additional education and support services at each Inova hospital. Your breast care navigator will be able to provide you with these resources.

## Community Resources

In addition to the many resources available at Inova, our team works closely with many breast cancer organizations, such as the American Cancer Society, to provide the most up-to-date information for our patients.

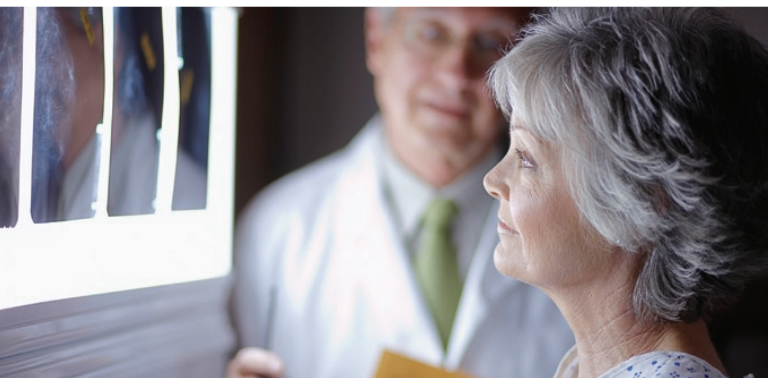
## Genetic Counseling

When you learn that you have breast cancer, many questions may come to mind:

- Did my cancer “just happen” or is it inherited?
- Are my children or other family members at risk?
- Should I undergo genetic testing?
- Would the results of genetic counseling affect my treatment?
- Am I at risk for developing other types of cancers?

Genetic counselors — specialists in cancer risk assessment — can help provide some answers while helping you to understand the benefits, risks and limitations of genetic testing. A genetic counseling appointment involves a careful evaluation of your personal and family medical history to help determine your cancer risk. When appropriate, genetic counselors order tests (which usually require only a simple blood specimen), interpret your results, and discuss ethical issues, including sharing results with your family members. To schedule a genetic counseling appointment, call **703-208-6026**.





## **Nutritional Support**

There may be times during your breast cancer treatment when you find eating difficult or unpleasant. Although this is a temporary situation, eating healthy foods helps you maintain your strength, rebuild body tissues and better tolerate your treatment. Our registered dietitians are available to evaluate your diet and help you make adjustments to meet your individual needs. Any member of your healthcare team can provide a no-cost referral to our nutrition services program.

## **Pain Management**

Not every cancer causes pain. However, pain may arise if your tumor enters sensitive parts of your body, such as bone or nerves. Chemotherapy, radiation therapy and surgery also may cause pain. Our pain management team is committed to alleviating the pain that can affect your quality of life. Of course, we respect the role that your family or cultural practices can play in influencing your pain experience.

## **Pastoral Care**

There may be times during your treatment when you and your loved ones desire spiritual support. A

chaplain may visit you in the hospital on a drop-in basis or by referral. Our chaplains serve as liaisons to community clergy, communicating your needs and those of your loved ones in a sensitive and confidential manner.

## **Palliative Care**

Palliative care, which relieves your symptoms but does not treat the cancer itself, helps you retain reasonable function and quality of life. The members of your healthcare team are committed to remaining sensitive to your possible need for palliative care.

## **Research**

Inova participates in world-class clinical trials that may offer you or a loved one the opportunity to test the effectiveness of new breast cancer treatments. Our research partners include some of the top medical universities and pharmaceutical companies in the nation. Together we are dedicated to the diagnosis, treatment and, ultimately, the prevention of breast cancer.

We also hold bi-monthly breast conferences that include representatives from radiology, medical oncology, radiation oncology, pathology, surgery and medicine to discuss cases, treatments and research. Our physicians continue their medical education on a regular basis through accredited programs that enhance their knowledge of the latest advances in cancer prevention, diagnosis and treatment.

Inova Health System is a not-for-profit healthcare system based in Northern Virginia that consists of hospitals and other health services, including emergency- and urgent-care centers, home care, nursing homes, mental health and blood donor services, and wellness classes. Governed by a voluntary board of community members, Inova's mission is to improve the health of the diverse community it serves through excellence in patient care, education and research. Inova provides a healthy environment for its patients, families, visitors, staff and physicians by prohibiting tobacco use on its campuses.



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