

Breast examination

Subject

Instructions for breast examination of clients as part of the Immigration Medical Examination (IME).

Goal/Objective

These instructions are intended to provide updated information on the requirements for breast examination of clients as part of the IME.

Instructions

Although breast examination has always been included in the IME, the Canadian Task Force on Preventive Health Care released new breast cancer screening guidelines in November 2011. According to the new guidelines, routine clinical breast examination and breast self-examination in asymptomatic women is no longer recommended. In reaching this recommendation, the Task Force noted the following:

No evidence was found indicating that Clinical Breast Exam or Breast Self Exam reduced breast cancer mortality or all-cause mortality. Two large trials identified no reduction in breast cancer mortality associated with teaching Breast Self Exam to women aged 31 to 64, but found evidence of increased harm for benign breast biopsy.

This recommendation reflects concerns with the potential harms of Clinical Breast Exam and Breast Self Exam and the corresponding lack of evidence of their effectiveness in decreasing mortality.

http://canadiantaskforce.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/CBE_BSE_recommendation_ENG.pdf

Therefore, the breast examination part of the IME form (Question 35 on the IMM5419 Physical Examination) **will only be completed for male or female clients, regardless of age, where the client or the Panel Physician (PP) has concerns regarding changes in breast(s)**. Note: Approximately 1% of all breast cancer occurs in men.

Breast examination must be conducted with sensitivity and, in the case of a male doctor and female client, preferably in the presence of a chaperone. Any female client who is unduly anxious about undergoing the breast examination should be referred to a female physician for this examination.

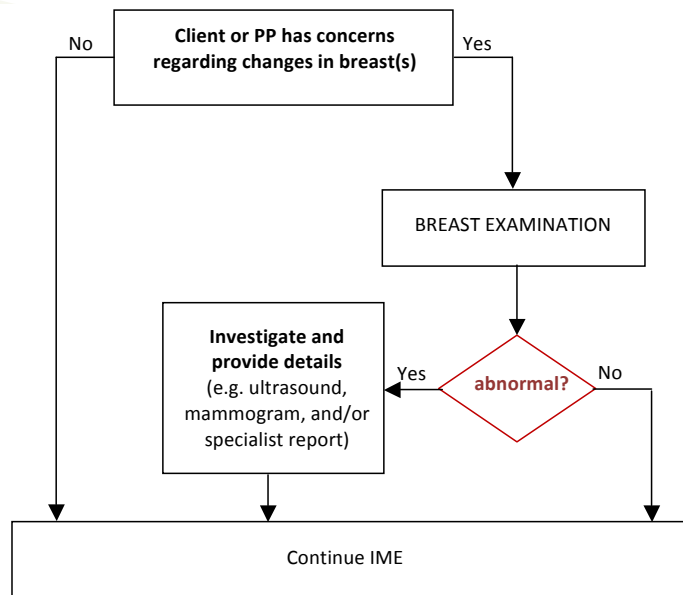
The PP should note any abnormalities and provide details on the IME form (Question 35 on the IMM5419 Physical Examination), and investigate, if required, e.g. ultrasound, mammogram, and/or specialist report.

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Grading

All IMEs with abnormal findings on breast examination must be graded B.

Algorithm



References

Canadian Task Force on Preventive Health Care, CTFPHC Recommendations Concerning Clinical Breast Exam and Breast Self Exam: http://canadiantaskforce.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/CBE_BSE_recommendation_ENG.pdf

Canadian Task Force on Preventive Health Care, *Screening for Breast Cancer*: <http://canadiantaskforce.ca/guidelines/2011-breast-cancer/>

Canadian Task Force on Preventive Health Care, "Recommendation on screening for breast cancer in average-risk women aged 40-74 years" (2011) 183:17 Canadian Medical Association Journal 1991-2001, DOI:10.1503/cmaj.110334: <http://www.cmaj.ca/content/183/17/1991.full.pdf+html>

HB Approval and Authority

Director General, NHQ, Health Branch, CIC

Implementation Date

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