

Do Men Know The Symptoms Of Male Breast Cancer?

Joe in Columbus: I am a man who was diagnosed with breast cancer about a year ago.

My first symptom was that my left nipple was inverted - it was pulling in. That began to increase and then it became very painful. One night, it hurt so badly that it woke me up. That's when I went to my local doctor who sent me on to a surgeon.

The surgeon said he didn't think I had breast cancer, but he tested me anyway and found out that I did. Eventually I went to a breast specialist to have the tumor removed.

Since this experience, I have run into four or five more cases in Columbus alone. I don't hear the media talk about male breast cancer though, so I'm calling to raise awareness.

Dr. Dean: The pulling in that you are describing can be a symptom of breast cancer in either a man or a woman. This pulling is called "peau d'orange" - skin of the orange - and it should be taken seriously, as should a lump, in either gender.

Nonetheless, I would expect that many general practitioners would brush you off, send you on your way with some antibiotics. Instead, your doctor had a topnotch response that may have saved your life.

Breast pain is more likely to be something other than breast cancer, but as your case illustrates, that's not always true.