Screening & Risk Reduction Options for Carriers of BRCA Mutations

Male Carriers:

- **Breast Cancer**
  - Clinical breast exam every 6-12 months, starting at age 35.
  - Monthly breast self-exam, beginning at age 35.
  - There are limited data available to support routine breast imaging in men. However, some experts suggest that men can consider having a baseline mammogram at age 40 and repeat yearly mammography if breast enlargement (gynecomastia) or dense breast tissue is noted on baseline screening.

- **Prostate Cancer**
  - Begin screening by age 40 including:
    - Yearly digital rectal exam
    - Yearly PSA blood test

- **Pancreatic cancer and Melanoma**
  - Based on the possible increased risk for melanoma, individuals with a BRCA2 mutation should consider a yearly full-body skin exam with a dermatologist and eye examinations by a specialist for eye (ocular) melanoma.
  
  Although BRCA2 carriers are at increased risk for pancreatic cancer, the majority of individuals with a BRCA2 mutation will not develop pancreatic cancer. No specific guidelines for pancreatic cancer screening in BRCA2 carriers exist and the risks, benefits, and limitations of pancreatic cancer surveillance are unknown. Individuals with a BRCA2 mutation may wish to speak to a specialist in high risk pancreatic cancer screening to further discuss the available screening options, particularly if they also have a family history of pancreatic cancer. In the New Haven area, please contact 203-200-5083 to schedule an appointment with Dr. James Farrell.
How to do a Male Breast Self Exam (MBSE)

1. Make a regular monthly date for your MBSE.
Mark the date for your male breast self exam on your calendar. This will help you stay on track and reduce anxiety about normal breast changes.

2. Start in Your Bath or Shower
Run a warm shower or bath. Use soap or bath gel to create a soapy, slippery layer over your breast area. Well-soaped skin will be easier to examine, as it allows your fingers to slide along your skin without rubbing.

3. Check Your Breast Texture
Raise your left arm over your head, and if possible, put your left hand on the back of your head. On your right hand, put your index finger, middle finger, and ring finger together as a group. You will use these three fingers to check your left breast. Check the texture of your left breast by starting at the outer edge. Place your three fingers flat onto your skin, press down and move in small circles. Repeat this all around your breast. Don't rush.

4. Check Your Nipple
Check your nipple by gently squeezing it between your index and ring fingers. Look for any discharge, puckering, or retraction (pulling inward).

5. Check Both Sides
Reverse your hands and check your right breast, using the same methods as Steps 3 and 4. Both breasts must be checked.

6. Visual Examination
Rinse yourself off and dry with a towel. Stand before a mirror which is large enough for you to see both breasts. Take note of any asymmetry and skin changes (rash, puckers, dimples).

7. How to Handle a Lump
Remember that most lumps in male breasts are due to gynecomastia, which is a benign condition. In addition, 80% of all breast lumps are not cancerous. But if you do feel any change in your breasts that causes concern, see your doctor for a clinical breast exam.
References:
