

ATYPICAL DUCTAL HYPERPLASIA

What is Ductal Hyperplasia?

- Ductal hyperplasia is a condition where there is a build-up of normal cells within the milk duct.
- It is benign (not cancer).

What is Atypical Ductal Hyperplasia (ADH)?

- This refers to an increased number of abnormal (atypical) cells seen within the milk duct.
- These off-looking cells can multiply and grow in excessive numbers (hyperplasia) but remain contained within the duct and are not classified as a cancer; however, more recent data based on modern screening and pathology suggests that ADH could be a very early form of precancer.

How are These Conditions detected?

- You cannot feel these early breast changes, as they do not cause lumps, pain or any other symptoms in the breast.
- If you have an abnormal mammogram, your physician may recommend a breast core biopsy.
- After your biopsy procedure, a pathologist carefully examines the breast tissue to look for any cellular changes or abnormal growth patterns.

What is the Treatment for Atypical Ductal Hyperplasia?

- If a core biopsy is positive for ADH your doctor will refer you to a breast surgeon for a consultation appointment.
- An open surgical biopsy is usually recommended to rule out any insitu or invasive disease. There is a 20-25 percent risk of finding insitu or invasive disease alongside ADH.

What is the follow-up required if surgery is not needed?

- Close follow-up includes, physical examination by your doctor every six months and yearly mammograms.
- Women who take hormones or who are considering their use in the future may want to review this with their doctor as recommendations are made on an individual basis.
- Your lifetime risk of developing breast cancer is two to four times higher than women who do not have this risk factor.
- Most women who have atypical hyperplasia do not go on to develop a breast cancer.

References:

1. Love, S. (2015). *Dr. Susan Love's breast book* (6th ed.). Boston: da Capo Press.
2. Olivotto, I., Gelmon, K., McCreedy, D., & Kuusk, U. (2017). *The intelligent patient guide to breast cancer* (6th ed.). Vancouver: Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication.

This information is of a general nature and may vary according to your special circumstances. If you have specific questions, please contact your physician or appropriate health care professional.