

Referral Support Service

Breast

BO8 Nipple Discharge

Definition

Unilateral or bilateral discharge from the nipple

Exclude Red Flag Symptoms

- Unilateral single duct discharge.
- Unilateral spontaneous, blood stained, serous or clear discharge.
- Any associated lump or skin changes.

Management

- If smoker encourage to stop smoking.
- If age > 50 routine referral unless meets fast track criteria
- Reassure patients with intermittent small volume of multi duct origin, insufficient to stain clothing
- Smoking cessation to be encouraged
- Weight loss (if appropriate) to be encouraged

Referral Information

Information to include in referral letter

- Outline condition and duration
- Family history of breast cancer
- Relevant past medical / surgical history
- Current regular medication
- BMI/ Smoking status

Investigations prior to referral

Clinical examination to reproduce symptom if possible and determine if single or multiple duct origin.

References

- Best Practice Guidelines For Patients Presenting With Breast Symptoms
- CRUK Guidelines For Referral of Patients With Breast Problems
- SIGN Guideline 84 : Management of Breast Cancer in Women

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