Breast cancer referral guidelines

Patient presents with

Discrete, hard lump with fixation, with or without skin tethering

Discrete, hard lump with fixation, with or without skin tethering

Lump that enlarges, or is fixed and hard, or reason for concern such as family history

Age 30 years or over with a discrete mass persisting after next period or presenting after the menopause

Any of the following:
- Spontaneous unilateral bloody nipple
- Unilateral eczematous skin or nipple change not responding to treatment
- Nipple distortion of recent onset
- Previously histologically confirmed breast cancer, plus lump or suspicious symptoms.

Benign lumps (for example fibroadenoma) or breast pain and no palpable abnormality non-urgent referral should be considered.

Age under 30 years

Men aged 50 years or over with unilateral, firm subareolar mass with or without nipple distortion or associated skin changes

Urgent referral

Do:

✓ Complete the 2ww form fully, including history, examination, PMH, medication, family history and what you have told the patient.
✓ Always examine patients presenting with breast symptoms and take the opportunity to teach breast awareness.

Don’t:

✗ Falsely reassure patients with lumps. If they fit criteria for referral, please refer.
✗ Forget about the non-lump signs of breast cancer; educate patients about these.
✗ Forget to ask about family history.