

Paget Disease

Definition of Terms:

- **Areola** — Dark, colored circle surrounding nipple
- **Biopsy** — Procedure to remove cells or tissues for study by a pathologist
- **Chemotherapy** — Treatment with medications to kill cancer cells
- **Intraductal** — Found inside of a duct
- **Invasive** — To penetrate through the walls of the ducts from which a cancer began to grow
- **Lumpectomy** — Removal of a lump and a small amount of surrounding tissue in the breast
- **Lymph Nodes** — Pea-like areas in the lymphatic system that act as filters for the body's cellular waste; lymph nodes under the arms filter waste from breast tissues
- **Malignant** — Cancerous; a threat to the body
- **Mastectomy** — Surgical removal of a breast
- **Metastasis** — Spread of cancer to other parts of the body
- **Radiation Therapy** — Use of X-ray treatments to kill cancer cells

Paget disease is a disease of the nipple, areola and the ducts under the nipple. The breast may produce a sticky, straw-colored or occasionally bloody discharge that causes irritation (eczema) with itching of the nipple and areola. A thickening of the nipple area and a crusty discharge may be found on one breast. If left to progress, it will eventually turn into an open sore. Usually, there is no lump found under the nipple area, but biopsy often confirms intraductal cancer. Occasionally, an infiltrating cancer may cause a lump. Paget disease accounts for approximately 1 – 4 percent of all breast cancers.

Surgery is required for this disease. Mastectomy is usually performed because lumpectomy is cosmetically not acceptable to most women (removal of the area under the nipple creates a doughnut-look to the breast with a lumpectomy). However, a lumpectomy may be performed. Lymph nodes may be removed to determine whether the cancer has spread from the breast. Chemotherapy and radiation therapy will be based on the type of surgery, tumor invasiveness, number of lymph nodes positive for cancer, age and menopausal status.

Additional Information:
