Discovering Hands Examination—How it is done.

The tactile breast examination is done by the blind and the visually impaired woman using the superior tactile ability of their fingers. The breast examination is carried out by palpation or sense of touch at their fingertips using index and middle fingers of both hands and involves no machinery or external gadgets. The palpatory exam is done on both breast areas and its surrounding chest area anteriorly, bordering from the collar bone down to the end of the breast fold and laterally or sideways on the left and right sides of the breasts.

The palpation is carried out on every inch of the mentioned area by applying 3 different kinds of pressure and in depth to feel the tumors in underlying lymphatic network, which is responsible for the growth of breast cancer tumors.

This examination is carried out by the blind and visually impaired woman independently and does not require additional person for assistance.

After greeting the patient, Patient history form is filled by the MTE upon interviewing the female patient to know more information about the patient’s family history, past surgeries, and past medical history including her menstruation condition and the details are noted by the MTE in her computer/tab/laptop. The MTE is also trained in computer applications for this reason.

MTE briefly explains the course of the investigation to the patient. After each course of examination, the MTE sanitizes her hands.

Manual Examination:

In the examining room, only the MTE and the female patient are present. After undressing her upper garments, the patient first undergoes breast check in sitting position where the MTE examines her breasts for any breast skin changes, lymph node swelling on the neck and collar bones, to check symmetry of breast contour, and temperature of breast skin.

Next, the patient lies down supine on the bed. MTE applies 5 self-adhesive strips or tactile tapes called DOCOS on the breast area and carries out palpatory examination at 5 different stages, examining every inch of both breasts and its surrounding area. The palpation involves rotational movement of MTE’s fingers, both superficially and in depth surveying the complete examining area. This investigation is done to check for any tumors or breast cancer, the location where the tumor is found. They can also find out shape, size and texture of the tumor.

This screening takes 30 to 40 minutes in duration. After the patient leaves the examination room, the palpation findings and general findings of the manual examination is documented by the MTE in her PC/laptop and the diagnostic report is submitted to the concerned physician. The physician will give the results to the patient and makes decision on further measures.