

Mastalgia is commonly experienced by women and is RARELY an indication of BREAST CANCER

This algorithm should be used to manage mastalgia in primary care among PRE-MENOPAUSAL women who have a normal clinical breast examination and have no evidence of a discrete lump

A pain chart should be completed for three consecutive months

Normal breast examination

Cyclical Pain

- Usually occurs in women 20-50 years
- Associated with the menstrual cycle
- Usually occurs 3-7 days before menstruation but may occur from the time of ovulation
- Pain and tenderness in the upper outer quadrant of the breast

- **REASSURE** following a normal breast examination
- **ASK** patient to complete a pain chart daily for 3 consecutive months
- **ADVISE** patient to wear a correctly fitted bra
- **ADVISE** patient to use simple analgesia and/or evening primrose oil for 3 months

Non-Cyclical Pain

- Usually occurs in women over 40 years
- Not associated with the menstrual cycle
- May arise from surrounding muscles or joints

- **REASSURE** following a normal breast examination
- **ASK** patient to complete pain chart daily for 3 consecutive months
- **ADVISE** patient to use simple analgesia and topical NSAID

Review after three months.

If pain is intractable send referral to symptomatic breast unit accompanied by the completed pain chart