Pathway for management and investigation of mastalgia

**Risk assessment** → Risk assessment based on FaHRAS toolkit or NICE CG164

- **Family history suggests near population risk**
  - Reassurance:
    - i) No association between breast pain alone and breast cancer
    - ii) Population risk - less than 17% over course of lifetime
  - Refer to familial cancer specialist service

- **Family history suggests moderate risk**
  - Non-cyclical
    - Consider causes of pain referred to the breast: eg costochondritis, axilla, idiopathic, infections, periductal mastitis. If infective consider breast unit referral if necessary.
  - Management same if uni- or bilateral
    - STEP 1: Check bra fittings & wear supportive underwear worn 24hrs/day
    - STEP 2: Paracetamol 1g QDS, daily for 2 weeks. Stop if no improvement. Further 2 weeks if improvement
    - STEP 3: NSAID gel or NSAIDs daily for 2-3 months
    - STEP 4: Oil of evening primrose otc (Patient advised RCT show similar efficacy as placebo & may take 4 months to see effect)
    - If no improvement or pain persists then refer to breast clinic for review & other treatment options (eg tamoxifen, GnRH analogues, danazol)

- **Family history suggests high risk**
  - Refer to familial cancer specialist service

- **Cyclical**
  - Ask her to complete a pain diary and review again in 2 months
  - Management same if uni- or bilateral
    - STEP 1: Check bra fittings & supportive underwear worn 24hrs/day
    - STEP 2: Paracetamol 1g QDS, daily for 2 weeks. Stop if no improvement. Further 2 weeks if improvement
    - STEP 3: NSAID gel or NSAIDs daily for 2-3 months
    - STEP 4: Oil of evening primrose otc (Patient advised RCT show similar efficacy as placebo & may take 4 months to see effect)
    - If specific reason (eg new sign such as lump or infection) or persistent severe pain then refer to breast clinic.

**Clinical sign present** → eg lump, discharge

- **No breast lump or other clinical signs on examination**
  - Refer to breast clinic as appropriate

**STEP 3**: NSAID gel or NSAIDs daily for 2-3 months

**KEY**
- Primary Care
- Secondary Care

Information
- [http://www.patient.co.uk/health/breast-pain-leaflet](http://www.patient.co.uk/health/breast-pain-leaflet)
- [Breast Pain by BCC](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3275318/)

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