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## PROPER BREAST EXAMINATION, CIRCA 1880

In the formation of a correct diagnosis of mammary tumors it is of the last importance that both breasts be fully exposed, and that the patient be placed in the recumbent posture. With regard to the first point little need be said, as a comparison of both glands frequently serves to clear up features which were obscure when the examination was confined to one alone. In many women who have borne children, and the more especially should the breasts be lax, if, as too commonly occurs, the organ be explored when it is partially confined by the corset, and it be seized between the thumb and fingers when the patient is seated, an enlarged or apparently enlarged lobe may be felt, which conveys the impression of a distinct tumor. If, however, the patient be recumbent, and the gland be permitted to rest in its normal position, gentle pressure with the fingers backward toward the chest will show that the supposed neoplasm has disappeared; while, if one really exists, it will not only not elude this mode of manipulation, but be rendered more prominent.

*From: Gross SW: A Practical Treatise on Tumors of the Mammary Gland: Embracing their Histology, Pathology, Diagnosis, and Treatment. New York, D Appleton and Co, 1880.*