



the jill lamb foundation

Breast Cancer Risks – Carcinoma in Situ

What is carcinoma in situ?

An abnormal growth of cells that stays within the area in which it started and has not invaded into surrounding breast tissue is called a *carcinoma in situ (CIS)* [kar-sin-OE-ma in SY-too]. The term in situ means “in place.” CIS is noninvasive because it hasn’t spread to surrounding tissue or other areas of the body. Invasive breast cancer is more serious because it can spread to the lymph nodes and to other areas of the body.

There are two types of CIS: *lobular carcinoma in situ (LCIS)* and *ductal carcinoma in situ (DCIS)*. LCIS is seen in the area of the breast where milk is made (the lobule). DCIS appears in the ducts that carry the milk from the lobules to the nipple of the breast. DCIS is considered a precancerous condition. It is highly treatable because it has not invaded or spread. LCIS is an abnormal change that indicates a higher risk of developing breast cancer in the future in either breast.

On mammograms, DCIS often looks like small clusters of abnormal calcium deposits called microcalcifications [MY-krow-kal-si-fi-KA- shunz]. These microcalcifications are seen long before a lump can be felt. However, LCIS cannot generally be seen on a mammogram. To correctly diagnose both LCIS and DCIS, a biopsy (removal of a sample of tissue) must be done.