



BREAST CANCER FACTS 2010

What is breast cancer?

Breast cancer knows few boundaries. It is one of the most frequently diagnosed cancers today. All women are at risk; and, although rare, men can also develop the deadly disease. Breast cancer is complex and unpredictable. We aren't sure what causes breast cancer, so, we can't say for sure how to prevent. We do know that early detection saves lives.

- An estimated 192,370 new cases of invasive breast cancer are expected to occur among women in the U.S. in 2009. An estimated 40,170 women will die. In addition to invasive breast cancer, 62,280 new cases of in situ breast cancer are expected to occur among women in 2009.
- An estimated 1,910 men will be diagnosed with breast cancer, and an estimated 440 will die in 2009.
- Breast cancer is the leading cancer among American women and second only to lung cancer in cancer deaths.
- More than two million women currently living in the U.S. have been diagnosed and treated for breast cancer.

Breast cancer is a type of cancer where cells in the breast tissue divide and grow without normal control. Like other cancers, breast cancer can spread throughout the body. Only a small fraction of breast cancer cases can be linked to genetics.

Who gets breast cancer?

Anyone can get breast cancer—women and men. But, the exact causes of breast cancer are not fully understood. Scientists have identified a number of risk factors that increase a person's chance of getting breast cancer.

- All women are at risk for breast cancer. The two most important risk factors for breast cancer are being female and getting older. The risk of getting breast cancer increases as you age. Most breast cancers and breast cancer deaths occur in women aged 50 and older. Until more is known about preventing breast cancer, early detection and effective treatment offer the best defense against breast cancer mortality.
- Although rare, younger women can also get breast cancer. Just five percent of all breast cancers occur in women under age 40
- Race is not considered a factor for increased risk of breast cancer. However, rates of developing and dying from the disease differ among ethnic groups.
- Breast cancer is the most common cancer among African American women. It is also the second leading cause of cancer death among African American women, exceeded only by lung cancer.
- Breast and ovarian cancer are somewhat more common among women of Ashkenazi Jewish descent (ancestors who came from Central or Eastern Europe).
- Breast cancer is the most common cancer among Hispanic/Latina women.
- Lesbians and women who partner with women have a greater risk of breast cancer than other women, but this is not because of their sexual orientation. Rather, it is linked to other risk factors (such as never having children or having them later in life) that are more common in these women
- About 85 percent of all women diagnosed with breast cancer DO NOT have a family history.

- Only about 10% of breast cancers occur because of inherited genetic traits.
- Breast cancer in men is rare, but it does happen.
- Women are less at risk of developing breast cancer if they eat a healthy diet and exercise.

Early Detection & Treatment

Early detection is the key to surviving breast cancer. When breast cancer is diagnosed at its earliest stages, the five-year survival rate is over 95 percent.

- Mammograms are the best and most widely available breast cancer screening tool. They can detect about 85 percent of all breast cancers.
- At age 40, women should get an annual mammogram.
- Know how your breasts look and feel and report changes to your health care provider
- Make healthy living choices; maintain a healthy weight, add exercise into your routine and limit alcohol intake.

CONFUSED ABOUT SCREENING?

There has been a longstanding debate over the most appropriate age to begin mammography screening and the frequency of screening examinations. As with all screening tests, the decision to perform a mammogram must include an evaluation of the benefits and the risks of the screening tool, as well as a consideration of patient preference.

The recent controversy about mammography should not suggest that there is debate about the most important issues. **Most breast cancer experts agree far more than they disagree. For example, there is no debate that mammography reduces the risk of dying from breast cancer.** As stated in the November 2009 US Preventive Services Task Force report, extensive scientific evidence demonstrates that mammography reduces breast cancer mortality both among women aged 50 and older, as well as among women aged 40 to 49.



Although mammography is not a perfect test, it is the most effective method available today for detecting breast cancer at its earliest, most curable stages. Approximately two-thirds of breast cancers are found on screening mammograms.

Reaction to the USPSTF report has been strong, with many groups including Komen for the Cure, the American Cancer Society, the Barbara Ann Karmanos Cancer Institute, the American College of Radiology and the American Society of Breast Surgeons sticking with their recommendations of annual mammograms starting at age 40. Clinical breast exams remain an important component of breast cancer screening, and awareness of the look and feel of your breasts by means of breast self-exam, continues to be useful.

Be sure to discuss your own personal risk with your physician. You can also seek more information from reliable sources.

For more information on breast cancer, please visit

Komen Detroit Race for the Cure®

<http://www.karmanos.org/detroitraceforthecure/index.asp?co=race>

Susan G Komen for the Cure

<http://ww5.komen.org/>