

OCTOBER Breast CANCER AWARENESS MONTH



LIVE WELL, WORK WELL

October 2022

Welcome to this month's edition of Live Well, Work Well. In this issue we will be focusing on the importance of Breast Cancer Awareness.

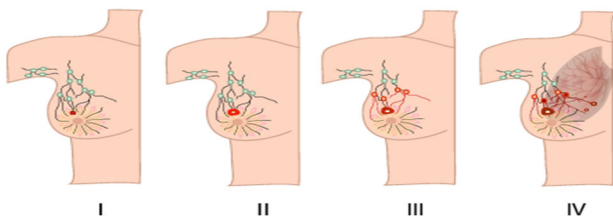
Breast Cancer 101

Cancer occurs when some of the body's cells behave abnormally—changing, growing and reproducing more than they should. In breast cancer, this abnormal growth begins in cells in the breast tissue. The term "breast cancer" actually includes a group of cancers that start in different parts of the breasts.

A breast cancer diagnosis comes with a lot of information, and it's normal to feel overwhelmed. It also affects a young woman's life differently. You are more likely to be single and dating, starting a career, raising young children or possibly starting a family. And cancer treatment may cause infertility, premature menopause and psychosocial issues like anxiety and depression.

Breast Cancer Stages

When you're diagnosed with breast cancer, your doctor will likely discuss the stages of breast cancer with you. Breast cancer staging is a way of classifying the extent and severity of your disease. Doctors use this information to help determine the best breast cancer treatment options.



The TNM Staging System

The TNM Staging system assigns a number after each letter to signify the size of the tumor (T), the number of lymph nodes involved (N) and whether the cancer has spread or metastasized (M). For example, a T1N2M0 tumor is a small primary tumor with two lymph nodes containing evidence of cancer and no sign of metastasis. Once the TNM numbers have been assigned, this information is used to determine stage grouping.

Grouping Breast Cancer Stages

There are five stages of breast cancer. These stages are determined based on the tumor size, lymph node involvement and whether the cancer has spread to another part of the body.

Stage 0 - Non-invasive or in situ cancer (DCIS, LCIS). In Stage 0 there is no evidence of cancer cells breaking out of the part of the breast in which they started. Paget's disease is typically stage 0.

Stage I - Invasive breast cancer with small tumor size and limited nodal involvement.

Stage II - Tumor is between 2 and 5 centimeters with or without nodal involvement.

Stage III - Tumor is over 5 centimeters and/or over 4 lymph nodes are involved and/or tumor is in the chest wall or skin.

Stage IV - The cancer has spread beyond the breast and lymph nodes to other parts of the body such as the bones, liver or lungs. Stage IV is also known as metastatic breast cancer. <https://www.youngsurvival.org/learn/about-breast-cancer/breast-cancer-101/types-of-breast-cancer>

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Being breast aware and self-examination

How to be breast aware

It's important to be "breast aware" and check your breasts regularly for changes. This is so you can identify any problems in your breasts. Any unusual changes to your breasts should be checked by your doctor as soon as possible.

Breast awareness means knowing your breasts and being aware of what changes are normal for you.

You can become familiar with your breasts by regularly looking at, and feeling, them in any way that is best for you. Health professionals no longer recommend a set way to check your breasts. It's important to feel all parts of your breasts including:

- your nipples
- in and around your armpits

Breast awareness five point code

1. know what is normal for you
2. know what changes to look and feel for
3. how your breasts look and feel
4. report any changes to your doctor immediately
5. attend for breast screening from the age of 50

If you're over 50 and have attended your screening appointment, it will be three years until your next appointment. In this three-year period, it's important you are "breast aware" and are able to self-examine your breasts.

It is important you see your doctor as soon as possible if you notice a change in your breasts. Most changes are harmless but you should make an appointment immediately.

Changes you should be looking for include:

- changes in appearance, size or outline of either breast, especially those caused by arm movement
- any puckering, skin irritation, dimpling, itching, swelling, or redness of the skin or veins that stand out more than usual
- any lumps or thickening hard or soft in either breast that feels different from the other breast that may or may not be painful

- any swelling or lumps under your armpit or around your collarbone
- changes to your nipples, including nipples that have become pulled in, changed shape or show signs of discharge, bleeding, rash or crusted, flaky skin

Breast Self – Exam

While lying down, put your right hand behind your head. With the finger pads of your left hand, feel your entire right breast and armpit area. Switch arms and repeat the exam for your left breast.

How Often Should You Perform a Self-Exam?

It's best to perform a self-exam once a month. After a while, it will become a simple part of your routine.

40% of cases of breast cancer are found by women who conducted their own self-exam. Had they waited until their doctor found breast cancer, their situation could have worsened significantly.

When Should You Start Performing Self-Exams?

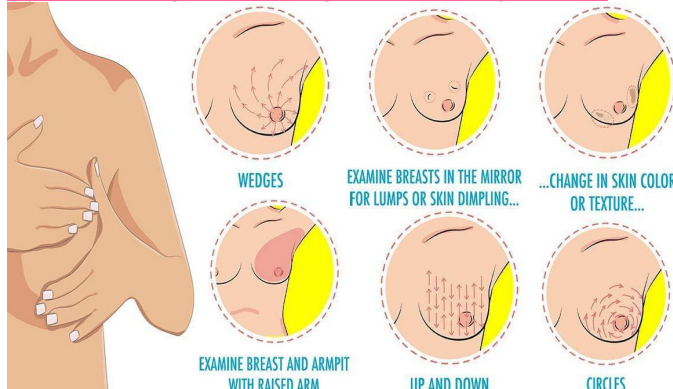
There's no perfect age to start performing regular self-exams. Some women may start as early as in their teens while others may wait until 20's or 30's. Truthfully, it never hurts to get to know your own body as early as possible.

How Can You Perform a Self-Exam?

There are three ways to perform a self-exam: in the shower, lying down, and standing in front of the mirror. All three are effective, so you will just have to experiment to figure out which way is best for you. Of course, it's best if you do all three types of exam, but choose at least one to perform routinely.

For each of these, keep in mind how your breasts feel to you. Make a mental note of what is normal for you, so you can better spot any changes or abnormalities.

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/being-breast-aware-and-self-examination>



What Can I Do to Reduce My Risk of Breast Cancer?

Many factors over the course of a lifetime can influence your breast cancer risk. You can't change some factors, such as getting older or your family history, but you can help lower your risk of breast cancer by taking care of your health in the following ways—

- Keep a healthy weight – A healthy diet provides nutrients that support the immune system. Eating a rainbow of fruits and vegetables is especially important.
- Be physically active – Many studies have shown that moderate to vigorous physical activity is linked with lower breast cancer risk, so it's important to get regular physical activity. The American Cancer Society recommends that adults get at least 150 to 300 minutes of moderate intensity or 75 to 150 minutes of vigorous intensity activity each week (or a combination of these), preferably spread throughout the week. Getting to or exceeding the upper limit of 300 minutes is ideal. Moderate activity is anything that makes you breathe as hard as you do during a brisk walk. It causes a slight increase in heart rate and breathing. You should be able to talk, but not sing during the activity. Vigorous activities are performed at a higher intensity. They cause an increased heart rate, sweating, and a faster breathing rate.
- Don't skimp on sleep – Healthy adults need 7-9 hours of sleep every night.
- Avoid or limit alcohol: Alcohol increases risk of breast cancer. Even drinking small amounts of alcohol has been linked with an increase in risk. It is best not to drink alcohol at all. For women who do drink, they should have no more than 1 alcoholic drink a day. A drink is 12 ounces of beer, 5 ounces of wine, or 1.5 ounces of 80-proof distilled spirits (hard liquor).
- If you are taking, or have been told to take, hormone replacement therapy^{external icon} or oral contraceptives^{external icon} (birth control pills), ask your doctor about the risks and find out if it is right for you.
- Breastfeed your children, if possible.
- If you have a family history of breast cancer or inherited changes in your BRCA1 and BRCA2 genes, talk to your doctor about other ways to lower your risk.

Staying healthy throughout your life will lower your risk of developing cancer, and improve your chances of surviving cancer if it occurs. https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/breast/basic_info/prevention.htm
<https://www.cancer.org/cancer/breast-cancer/risk-and-prevention/can-i-lower-my-risk.html>



Cancer can be ruff—therapy dogs may help

Dogs are often called “man’s best friend” for a good reason—just being around them may instantly help to make your day brighter. With a lick and a snuggle, therapy dogs may also be able to provide certain benefits to you or your loved ones who are living with cancer. Pet therapy, sometimes referred to as animal-assisted therapy, has become more popular in recent years. From playing with children in hospitals to visiting people living with cancer, it’s been shown that these furry, friendly visitors may provide important health benefits.

The emotional and physical benefits of therapy dogs

Living with cancer and going through treatments can be stressful. Spending time with a therapy dog has been shown to help lower blood pressure and stress levels. It can also boost levels of feel-good hormones (endorphins), which can help ease pain and discomfort.

Benefits of pet therapy can include:

- Decreased pain levels
- Improvements with anxiety and depression
- Less fatigue
- Improved mood
- Help fighting loneliness and social isolation
- Restoring a sense of emotional connection

In a recent study, researchers discovered that when cancer patients spent time with a therapy dog during chemotherapy and radiation treatment, their emotional well-being and quality of life showed measurable improvement. In another study examining animal-assisted activities (AAA) on hospital patients going through chemotherapy, symptoms of depression were shown to improve by as much as 50% in the group that interacted with the animals.

Make sure to talk to your healthcare provider before spending time with any animal, especially if you have a weakened immune system. Your healthcare provider can also help you understand any risks before adopting or buying a dog, so you can make sure you’re doing what’s best for you and the dog.

Therapy dogs come in all different sizes and breeds. The most common ones include golden retrievers, poodles, dachshunds, pugs and Labradors. Some have calmer temperaments and will be happy to lie on the bed with you rather than play fetch. See if a visit from a therapy dog may fit into your treatment plan—you may even make a new furry friend!

<https://www.thisislivingwithcancer.com/node/2074>

How dietary needs change throughout cancer treatment

When thinking about what constitutes a healthy diet, most people have images of fresh salads, high fiber grains, modest amounts of healthy fats and consuming less sugar. Those going through cancer treatment may be encouraged to follow dietary practices different from what they might have been told before cancer treatment. This includes the need to focus on consuming more calorie dense foods in an effort to provide the largest amount of calories without having to eat much, in cases of low appetite, to make sure patients maintain weight during treatment.

Nutritional needs before treatment

It is important to go into treatment as healthy as possible. This means following a diet rich in a variety of foods such as lean protein, healthy fats, complex carbohydrates and plenty of produce along the way. It is hard to know what eating issues may arise during treatment, so try to eat as normally as possible and aim to maintain your weight by eating a healthy diet prior to beginning cancer treatment. Take time to stock your pantry and refrigerator with to-go snack items and precooked meals to make life easier. Create a grocery list your loved ones can use to help with grocery runs during treatment.

Nutritional needs during treatment

Treatment may feel a little different each day. As appetite can fluctuate, it is important to maintain calorie and protein intake to support your body and avoid excessive weight loss that can further compromise your immune system. When you have a healthy appetite, load up on calories, aiming for nutrient-dense foods. Calorie dense foods that also contain protein can be helpful for maintaining weight. Some examples are:

- Peanut butter
- Eggs
- Roasted nuts
- Protein powder
- Treatment may also make you more prone to infection, so it is important to use proper food-handling skills to reduce your risk of foodborne illness:
- Wash your hands, utensils and countertops frequently
- Avoid raw or undercooked protein

- Wash all produce thoroughly, even those with a non-edible peel, like melon, bananas and avocados, and ensure you do not cross contaminate with any raw meat
- Designate one cutting board for proteins and another for fruits and vegetables

Nutrition needs after treatment

Once your treatment plan is completed, it is reasonable to expect most eating issues to improve, and eating a healthy diet can make you stronger, help you maintain your weight and help you fight infection. Try your best to:

- Eat a wide variety of foods to ensure broad nutrient intake of (or with) the necessary vitamins and minerals
- Limit processed items with added salt, artificial ingredients, sodium nitrite and unfamiliar ingredient names
- Limit alcohol and choose beverages with no added sugar or artificial sweeteners. Use fresh fruit or herbs, like mint, to add flavor and additional nutrients
- Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables, raw or cooked, to pack in vitamins, minerals and fiber

No matter what eating issues may arise before, during or after treatment, we hope these tips, along with information from your personal physician and dietitian, can help make the challenging times a little easier.

The information contained herein is provided for educational purposes only and is not intended to replace discussions with a healthcare provider. All decisions regarding patient care should be made with a healthcare provider.

<https://www.thisislivingwithcancer.com/content/how-dietary-needs-change-throughout-cancer-treatment>



Did You Know?



BlueCross BlueShield of Texas



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Virtual Visits, provided by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas (BCBSTX) and powered by MDLIVE®, are a convenient alternative for treatment of more than 80 health conditions, including:

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- Go to MDLIVE.com/bcbstx
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Last Month's Events:

Spirit Fridays



Health & Wellness Seminar

"Prostate Cancer Awareness"



1st Annual Employee Golf Tournament



Upcoming Events:

Walking Program

Tuesdays and Thursdays
4:30PM at your designated facility

Spirit Fridays

Wear NFL/MLB player's/high school jersey or shirt to work.

Health & Wellness Seminar

"Breast Cancer Awareness Luncheon"

Monday, October 03, 2022

at Mission Event Center

11:30AM to 1:00PM

Blood Drive

Wednesday, October 12, 2022

at CEED Parking Lot

9:30AM – 1:00PM

Delta Dental Presentation

Tuesday, October 18, 2022

9:30AM at City Hall Community Room

Health Fair

Wednesday, October 26, 2022

at Mission Event Center

7:30AM – 10:30AM

Let's Get Moving

OCTOBER

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
				Windmills 10 Knee raises 10 Arm circles 10	Side twists 10 Chair squats 10 Marching 20s	Windmills 12 Knee raises 12 Arm circles 12
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
REST DAY	Side twists 12 Chair squats 12 Marching 24s	Windmills 14 Knee raises 14 Arm circles 14	Side twists 14 Chair squats 14 Marching 26s	REST DAY	Windmills 16 Knee raises 16 Arm circles 16	Side twist 16 Chair squats 16 Marching 28s
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Windmills 18 Knee raises 18 Arm circles 18	REST DAY	Side twist 18 Chair squats 18 Marching 30s	Windmills 20 knee raises 20 Arm circles 20	Side twist 20 Chair squats 20 Marching 32s	REST DAY	Windmills 22 Knee raises 22 Arm circles 22
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Side twists 21 Chair squats 22 Marching 34s	Windmills 23 Knee raises 23 Arm circles 23	REST DAY	Side twists 22 Chair squats 23 Marching 36s	Windmills 24 Knee raises 24 Arm circles 24	Side twists 23 Chair squats 24 Marching 40s	REST DAY
26	27	28	29	30	31	
Windmills 25 Knee raises 26 Arm circles 24	Side twists 24 Chair squats 25 Marching 42s	Windmills 26 Knee raises 27 Arm circles 24	REST DAY	Side twists 26 Chair squats 27 Marching 45s	Windmills 27 Knee raises 28 Arm circles 25	