

Think Pink: *For Breast Cancer Awareness*



There will be an estimated 235,000 new cases of breast cancer within one year in the United States alone, and it will account for over 40,000 American deaths this year. There is a good chance that each of us has been affected by breast cancer in some form – whether our own health, a family member, friend, or loved one.

With three big risk factors being non-modifiable, what can you control?

Like many types of cancer, eating healthy, exercising regularly, maintaining a healthy weight, and not using tobacco products all help to reduce your risk of breast cancer. Additionally, there is evidence that shows that excessive alcohol consumption can increase your risk, while breastfeeding can lower your risk. Discuss with your doctor before beginning hormone therapy, as studies have linked breast cancer to menopausal hormone replacement therapy.

Because we cannot change the leading risk factors, receiving preventive screenings are essential for early detection. It is recommended that women in their 20s and 30s receive a clinical breast exam at least every three years, and women over the age of 40 receive an exam every year. Additionally, women should get a mammogram every one to two years, according to their doctor's recommendations, starting at the age of 40.



Don't wait for your physician to tell you something is suspect! Monthly self-exams are a vital component of an early detection plan. For more information on how to conduct a meaningful self-exam, visit www.nationalbreastcancer.org/breast-self-exam.

Breast Cancer Myths...

- 1** **Men cannot get breast cancer, it only affects women.** While breast cancer is not as common in men, they are still at risk. An estimated 2,200 men will be diagnosed with breast cancer this year, and over 400 will die. Though these statistics are significantly smaller than their female counterparts, it is important that men periodically do a self-exam and promptly report any changes or abnormalities to their physician.
- 2** **Any lump in the breast tissue is cancer.** Only about twenty percent of breast lumps are cancerous. However, if you discover a new or changing lump, it is important to schedule an appointment with your physician to discuss your findings. Do not ignore your body and its warning signs.
- 3** **Mammograms can cause cancer to spread.** Breast compression during a mammogram will not cause cancer to spread. Mammograms are the gold standard for detecting breast cancer, and it is recommended that women over the age of 40 get a mammogram every one to two years. Additionally, the radiation used in mammography is in very small doses, and the risk of harm from this radiation is negligible.
- 4** **Deodorants or antiperspirants can cause breast cancer.** Researchers at the National Cancer Institute have not found any conclusive evidence linking the use of deodorants or antiperspirants and the development of breast cancer.
- 5** **Breast implants increase your risk of breast cancer.** There is no scientific evidence that shows that either saline or silicone breast implants increase breast cancer risk. A meta-analysis and cohort studies have found no increase in breast cancer risk among women with breast implants.

Sources: National Breast Cancer Foundation (nationalbreastcancer.org), American Cancer Society (cancer.org), Susan G. Komen for the Cure (komen.org)

