



# OCTOBER IS *Breast Cancer* AWARENESS MONTH



## What Is Breast Cancer?

Breast cancer is a disease in which malignant (cancer) cells form in the tissues of the breast. The damaged cells can invade surrounding tissue, but with early detection and treatment, most people continue a normal life.

## A Global Burden

According to the World Health Organization, breast cancer is the most common cancer among women worldwide, claiming the lives of hundreds of thousands of women each year and affecting countries at all levels of modernization.

## Good News About Breast Cancer Trends

In recent years, perhaps coinciding with the decline in prescriptive hormone replacement therapy after menopause, we have seen a gradual reduction in female breast cancer incidence rates among women aged 50 and older. Death rates from breast cancer have been declining since about 1990, in part to better due to screening and early detection, increased awareness, and continually improving treatment options.

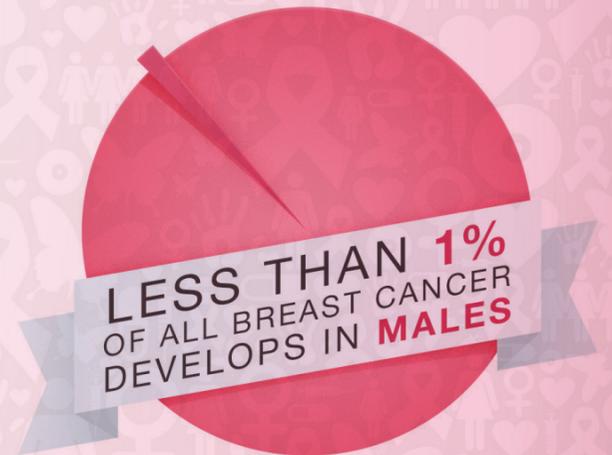
**BREAST CANCER IS THE MOST COMMON CANCER AMONG WOMEN WORLDWIDE**

## Facts About Breast Cancer In The United States

**1 in 8**  
**WOMEN**  
WILL BE DIAGNOSED WITH  
***Breast Cancer***  
IN THEIR LIFETIME



- One in eight women will be diagnosed with breast cancer in their lifetime.
- Breast cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in women.
- Breast cancer is the second leading cause of death among women.
- Each year it is estimated that over 220,000 women in the United States will be diagnosed with breast cancer and more than 40,000 will die.
- Although breast cancer in men is rare, an estimated 2,150 men will be diagnosed with breast cancer and approximately 410 will die each year.



## Male Breast Cancer

All people, whether male or female, are born with some breast cells and tissue. Even though males do not develop milk-producing breasts, a man's breast cells and tissue can still develop cancer. Even so, male breast cancer is very rare. Less than one percent of all breast cancer cases develop in men, and only one in a thousand men will ever be diagnosed with breast cancer.

Breast cancer in men is usually detected as a hard lump underneath the nipple and areola. Men carry a higher mortality than women do, primarily because awareness among men is less and they are less likely to assume a lump is breast cancer, which can cause a delay in seeking treatment.

## Risk Factors

- Radiation exposure
- High levels of the hormone estrogen
- Family history of breast cancer, especially breast cancer that is related to the BRCA2 gene.

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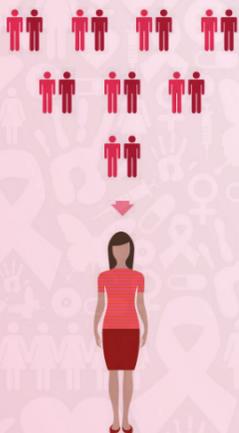
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## THINGS TO KNOW

### What Do Scientists Actually Know About The Cause Of Breast Cancer?

Cancer grows when a cell's DNA is damaged, but why or how that DNA becomes damaged is still unknown. It could be genetic or environmental, or in most cases, a combination of the two. But most patients will never know exactly what caused their cancer. However, there are certain established risk factors that are associated with breast cancer.

#### GENETIC



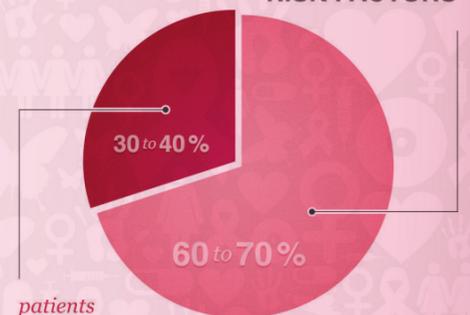
#### ENVIRONMENTAL



### Risk Factors That Cannot Be Changed

- **Gender:** Breast cancer occurs nearly 100 times more often in women than in men.
- **Age:** Two out of three women with invasive cancer are diagnosed after age 55.
- **Race:** Breast cancer is diagnosed more often in caucasian women than women of other races.
- **Family History and Genetic Factors:** If your mother, sister, father or child has been diagnosed with breast or ovarian cancer, you have a higher risk of being diagnosed with breast cancer in the future. Your risk increases if your relative was diagnosed before the age of 50.
- **Personal Health History:** If you have been diagnosed with breast cancer in one breast, you have an increased risk of being diagnosed with breast cancer in the other breast in the future. Also, your risk increases if abnormal breast cells have been detected before (such as atypical hyperplasia, lobular carcinoma in situ (LCIS) or ductal carcinoma in situ (DCIS)).
- **Menstrual and Reproductive History:** Early menstruation (before age 12), late menopause (after 55), having your first child at an older age, or never having given birth can also increase your risk for breast cancer.
- **Certain Genome Changes:** Mutations in certain genes, such as BRCA1 and BRCA2, can increase your risk for breast cancer. This is determined through a genetic test, which you may consider taking if you have a family history of breast cancer. Individuals with these gene mutations can pass the gene mutation onto their children.
- **Dense Breast Tissue:** Having dense breast tissue can increase your risk for breast cancer and make lumps harder to detect. Several states have passed laws requiring physicians to disclose to women if their mammogram indicates that they have dense breasts so that they are aware of this risk. Be sure to ask your physician if you have dense breasts and what the implications of having dense breasts are.

patients without KNOWN RISK FACTORS



patients with KNOWN RISK FACTORS

### AVOIDABLE RISK FACTORS



SEDENTARY LIFESTYLE



ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION



COMBINED HORMONE REPLACEMENT THERAPY

### Causes Of Breast Cancer: How Did This Happen?

When you're told that you have breast cancer, it's natural to wonder what may have caused the disease. But no one knows the exact causes of breast cancer. Doctors seldom know why one woman develops breast cancer and another doesn't, and most women who have breast cancer will never be able to pinpoint an exact cause. What we do know is that breast cancer is always caused by damage to a cell's DNA.

### THESE DO NOT CAUSE BREAST CANCER



CAFFEINE



DEODORANT



MICROWAVES



CELL PHONES



CONTACT WITH SOMEONE WHO HAS CANCER

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## Signs & Symptoms

Every person should know the symptoms and signs of breast cancer, and any time an abnormality is discovered, it should be investigated by a healthcare professional.

Most people who have breast cancer symptoms and signs will initially notice only one or two, and the presence of these symptoms and signs do not automatically mean that you have breast cancer.

By performing monthly breast self-exams, you will be able to more easily identify any changes in your breast. Be sure to talk to your healthcare professional if you notice anything unusual.

## Early Detection

Women should perform a self breast-exam each month and any changes or abnormalities should be discussed with a doctor or physician.

### A Change In How The Breast Or Nipple Feels

- Nipple tenderness or a lump or thickening in or near the breast or underarm area
- A change in the skin texture or an enlargement of pores in the skin of the breast (some describe this as similar to an orange peel's texture)
- A lump in the breast (It's important to remember that all lumps should be investigated by a healthcare professional, but not all lumps are cancerous.)

### A Change In The Breast Or Nipple Appearance

- Any unexplained change in the size or shape of the breast
- Dimpling anywhere on the breast
- Unexplained swelling of the breast (especially if on one side only)
- Unexplained shrinkage of the breast (especially if on one side only)
- Recent asymmetry of the breasts (Although it is common for women to have one breast that is slightly larger than the other, if the onset of asymmetry is recent, it should be checked.)
- Nipple that is turned slightly inward or inverted
- Skin of the breast, areola, or nipple that becomes scaly, red, or swollen or may have ridges or pitting resembling the skin of an orange

### Any Nipple Discharge—Particularly Clear Discharge Or Bloody Discharge

It is also important to note that a milky discharge that is present when a woman is not breastfeeding should be checked by her doctor, although it is not linked with breast cancer.



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