



# October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month

## Breast Cancer Facts

Breast cancer, while the second most common kind of cancer in women can also occur in men, although male breast cancer is rare. About 1 in 8 women born today in the United States will get breast cancer at some point.

## Risk Factors and Prevention

Many risk factors can increase a person's chance of developing breast cancer, but it is not yet known exactly how some of these risk factors cause cells to become cancerous. Hormones seem to play a role in many cases of breast cancer, and certain inherited DNA mutations can increase the risk for developing certain cancers that run in some families. Body weight, physical activity, and diet have all been linked to breast cancer, so these might be areas where you can take action.

- ❖ Both increased body weight and weight gain as an adult are linked with a higher risk of breast cancer after menopause.
- ❖ Alcohol also increases risk of breast cancer. Even low levels of alcohol intake have been linked with an increase in risk.
- ❖ Many studies have shown that moderate to vigorous physical activity is linked with lower breast cancer risk.
- ❖ A diet that is rich in vegetables, fruit, poultry, fish, and low-fat dairy products has also been linked with a lower risk of breast cancer in some studies. But it is not clear if specific vegetables, fruits, or other foods can lower risk. Most studies have not found that lowering fat intake has much of an effect on breast cancer risk.
- ❖ Not using hormone therapy after menopause can help you avoid raising your risk.
- ❖ Environmental chemicals that have estrogen-like properties (like those found in some plastic bottles or certain cosmetics and personal care products) might increase breast cancer risk. If there is an increased risk, it is likely to be very small. Still, women who are concerned may choose to avoid products that contain these substances when possible.

## Importance of Screening and Early Detection

Other than lifestyle changes, the most important action a woman can take is to follow the American Cancer Society's guidelines for early detection. The good news is that many women can survive breast cancer if it's found and treated early. A mammogram – the screening test for breast cancer – can help find breast cancer early when it's easier to treat

- ❖ If you are a woman age 40 to 49, talk with your doctor about when to start getting mammograms and how often to get them.
- ❖ If you are a woman age 50 to 74, be sure to get a mammogram every 2 years. You may also choose to get them more often. Talk to a doctor about your risk for breast cancer, especially if a close family member of yours has had breast or ovarian cancer. Your doctor can help you decide when and how often to get mammograms.

Reference: American Cancer Society accessed at

<http://www.cancer.org/cancer/breastcancer/detailedguide/breast-cancer-prevention-on-9/24/14>



Trust in the Lord with all your heart, on your own intelligence do not rely;  
In all your ways be mindful of Him, and He will make straight your paths." ~Proverbs 3:5-6 (NABRE)  
*This educational event is sponsored by St. Mary's Parish Nurse Ministry*